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THE  
KNIGHTS

OF THE

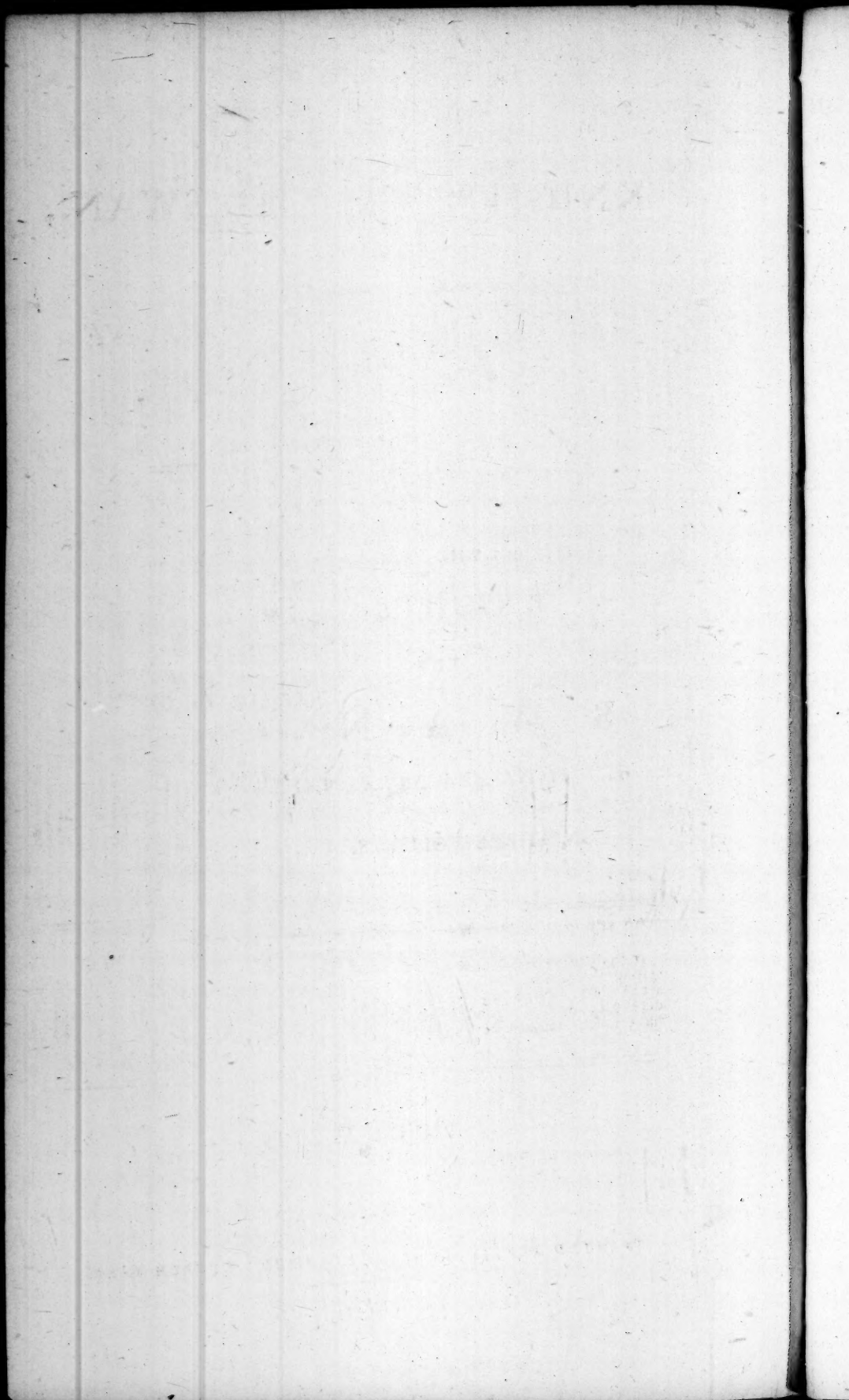
S W A N;

*A HISTORICAL AND MORAL TALE.*

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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THE  
KNIGHTS OF THE SWAN;

OR,

THE COURT OF CHARLEMAGNE:

A HISTORICAL AND MORAL TALE:

TO SERVE AS A CONTINUATION TO

THE TALES OF THE CASTLE:

AND OF WHICH ALL THE INCIDENTS THAT BEAR  
ANALOGY TO THE FRENCH REVOLUTION  
ARE TAKEN FROM HISTORY.

---

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF  
MADAME DE GENLIS,

AUTHOR OF THE

THEATRE OF EDUCATION, ADELAIDE & THEODORE, &c.

BY THE REV. MR. BERESFORD.

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An age of pain does not atone for a moment of guilt.

TH. CORNEILLE.

If that adversity which arises from loss of fortune fix our attachment stronger towards the friend who suffers, and force us to new efforts to assist him; the loss of innocence, when it happens from no habitual depravity, forms a much stronger motive to exertion, when those who have fallen struggle to raise themselves up.

SETHOS, Book 8.

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THE  
KNIGHTS OF THE SWAN, &c.

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CHAPTER I.

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*THE HISTORY OF OGER THE DANE.*

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Pianger de' quel che già sia fatto servo  
Di due vaghi occhi e d'una bella treccia ;  
Sotto cui si nasconda un cor protervo,  
Che poco puro abbia con molta feccia  
Vorria il miser fugire ; et come cervo  
Ferito, ovunque va porta la freccia,  
Ha di se stesso e del suo amor vergogna  
Nè l'osa dire ! e in van sanassi agogna.

L'ARIOSTE.

“ YOU have been the witness, my dear Isambard, of some of my follies, but you are but little acquainted with what gave them birth ; and since you are desirous to know the real motives which induced me to abandon the sword, and retire from the converse of mankind, I must give you some idea of my disposition, my opinions, and my errors, and of course I am going to relate the whole story of my life.

“ I was born in the reign of the sage Sigefroy ; I received my education at an ancient castle far distant

from the court, and my father, who was the most learned man of his time in Denmark, was my sole preceptor. From my tenderest infancy I displayed a strong passion for glory; that is to say, for war; for in the age in which we live, these two ideas unhappily are inseparable: but my father rectified them in giving me the definition of true valour: *it is, said he, virtue combating for justice* \*. This maxim I have ever endeavoured to make the rule of my conduct. Sigefroy drew my father from his solitude, called him near his person, and made him his minister. Denmark applauded his choice, and appeared sensible of the rare felicity of being governed by a good king, and a virtuous and enlightened minister. I was then sixteen years old; in a few months after I heard of the war between Charlemagne and Didier, king of the Lombards. Didier appeared in my eyes unfortunate and oppressed. I obtained permission to espouse his cause, and I repaired into Lombardy (1). I made my first essay in arms with prince Adalgise, who was then but seventeen years of age. You have heard, Isambard, that at the beginning of a battle, I had the audacity to challenge Charlemagne; he demanded of me my name; that name, said I, is yet unknown, but it depends upon you, my lord, to render it renowned, if you accept my challenge. Well, replied Charlemagne, I accept it; and advancing forwards, he quitted the ranks, and came towards me with his lance in it's rest. The combat began; but hardly had we come to blows, when Adalgise, followed by a party of soldiers, fell upon Charlemagne, and giving him a

\* This is the fine definition which the stoics gave of courage.

thrust of his lance on the side, threw him upon the ground. The army, impelled by just resentment, rushed to his aid, but could not have hindered him from being taken prisoner, had the treachery of Adalgise and his unmanly companions been seconded by me. Transported with rage, I kept them aloof with one hand, whilst with the other I assisted Charlemagne to rise; on seeing the hero upon his feet again, they took to flight and dragged away Adalgise by force, who not having been able to assassinate his enemy, was now going to lay violent hands upon himself (2). After the battle, which we lost, Charlemagne, who had heard of my age with some surprise, sent me, by a herald, a magnificent suit of armour, which I have worn ever since. This adventure drew upon me the hatred of Adalgise. That prince, whose nature is savage, impetuous, and revengeful, has oftentimes displayed rash courage, but almost always sullied by violence and ferocity; which, notwithstanding his tender years, had already strongly marked his character. This war led me to the knowledge of all the great qualities of Charlemagne; I admired his heroic valour, his activity, his genius, and, above all, his generosity. On the attainment of every victory, I have seen him constantly proposing peace\*; and I then considered him still greater than when in the field of battle. Didier, overpowered by hatred, blindly rushed upon his own destruction: all the enemies of France, who surrounded him, daily increased his resentment; their pernicious

\* See l'histoire de Charlemagne, par Mr. Gaillard, tome 2.

counsel induced him to continue the war; and to that counsel he fell a victim. I shut myself up with him in the city of Pavia, when it was besieged by a French army; but the people, tired out by a bloody war, which was prolonged by the desire of vengeance, opened the gates of Pavia to Charlemagne, and gave up to him the unhappy Didier, and the same Kiermengarde, whose divorce had proved the cause of the war; and thus was it, she again saw that formidable monarch, who was once her husband, but now her enemy and conqueror! I was made prisoner, together with all the suite of Didier. Charlemagne sent for me; as soon as that prince perceived me, he advanced, and embracing me: ‘Oger,’ said he, ‘by accepting the armour I sent you, you became a French knight; but it is just that I respect the liberty of him, who so generously preserved mine. I am desirous to have you at my court; however, you are free to quit it if you think proper; but do not forget that France will be ever a second country to you, and Charlemagne a grateful and faithful friend.’—When kings know how to speak in this manner, how do they extend and establish their empire!

“This prince, equally enlightened and magnanimous, respected the form of government among the Lombards, which he found already established; he took upon himself to make no change that was not absolutely necessary, had recourse to no precaution that was not indispensable; he seemed to rely upon the faith of the conquered; he appeared in the midst of them attended with a slight guard, he left them their estates, their laws



laws, and their customs\* ; a useful and splendid lesson to conquerors, did conquerors know how to profit by examples of justice and moderation ! Loaded with the favours of Charlemagne, I left Pavia ; and, notwithstanding my disputes with Adalgise, I considered, that his misfortunes, and the party I had espoused, claimed all the attention I had in my power to bestow ; I discovered the place of his retreat, I sought him, and became the companion of his flight ; nor did I leave him till he had no longer any want of my services.

“ I travelled for more than a year, and then returned to Denmark. I there found Witikind, at that time, the beloved chief of the Saxons, and the intrepid defender of their liberty. He had just lost a battle against Charlemagne, which appeared decisive ; and obliged to flee from a country in the possession of his enemies, he had taken refuge at the court of Sigefroy, who approved himself worthy of the confidence of that illustrious fugitive. In Saxony the emigration was prodigious ; those friends to liberty were repulsed, and persecuted, in almost every state of Europe ; the kings seemed to dread those high spirited republicans, and their suspicion called forth that of their own people, who imagined the apprehension of their kings to be founded upon the full conviction, that the republican was preferable to the monarchical form of government. Hence is it, that an intolerant and unskilful policy led the people to a blind admiration of such principles, as they would neither have received nor discussed, had kings consulted generosity, which is ever on the side of reason. The per-

\* The whole of this paragraph is literally copied from Mr. Galliard's history of Charlemagne, vol. 2, p. 123.



secution at length produced a double effect; it rendered the oppressed interesting, and gave a dazzling splendour to their cause; and hence those seeds of troubles and revolts, which have been sown in several kingdoms since the commencement of this unjust and fatal war.

“ Denmark, owing to the wisdom of a good king and able minister, is sheltered from the storm. The mildness and justice of its government secure the public tranquillity. The Saxon emigrants are received there with humanity, and live without molestation (3). Refugees know how to respect the sacred rights of hospitality: and their own interest and a sense of gratitude afford a pledge of their good conduct. I have seen with pleasure, in Denmark, even in places inhabited by the court, groups of Saxons taking part in public rejoicings, applauding the love of the people for the royal family, and blending with our songs their celebrated hymn of *the great Arminius*, without giving the least umbrage to our ministry (4). Noble and captivating security, which seems to proclaim to the whole nation, *I take too much concern in your welfare, not to have reliance upon your generosity*. The Danes, indeed, interest themselves in favour of the Saxons, but are not the less attached to monarchical government; imposts and despotism are the causes of revolutions; a happy people will always be faithful to their chief. In the mean while I sought every occasion to see Witikind; the converse of that great man inspired the warmest interest for his cause; my admiration for Charlemagne did not induce me to allow the justice of the war which that prince carried on against the Saxons; and at length, enraptured at the discourses of Witikind, I  
promised

promised to fight under his banners, if he should prove, as he hoped, able to rally his scattered forces.

“ In reality, he set off in a few months for Saxony, and I followed him; he there found himself at the head of a numerous army, and the war broke out afresh. I made the whole campaign, which proved fortunate and brilliant to the Saxons, but in my eyes was sullied by devastation and cruelty, which moderated the enthusiasm I had gained in my intercourse with Witikind. Courage without generosity is but an odious and ferocious instinct; the contempt of death is a virtue in the mind of the compassionate and tender only; but the man who embrues his hands in the blood of a suppliant enemy, who in his murderous fury distinguishes neither age nor sex, and believes that war can give sanction to assassination and massacre, is, whatever his exploits may be, only a sanguinary monster, an infamous plunderer, the scourge and opprobrium of mankind. I beheld villages set on fire, and age, and infancy perish together in the flames; at length, I saw the Saxons, in the shameful excess of their fury, take the execrable resolution to give no quarter to their prisoners!—(5) At those horrid proceedings Witikind shuddered, but was unable to arrest their progress; he even became liable to suspicion by the endeavours he made to repress them.—Then did war appear odious to me; I had come in quest of glory, but I found myself an accomplice in the most atrocious of crimes. A truce was made, I withdrew from the army, and again set out upon my travels. I had heard of the admirable laws which Charlemagne had given his subjects; I was desirous of seeing so novel a spectacle, and I made an

excursion into France. It was then on beholding Charlemagne in those famous legislative assemblies, that I began to form an idea of real glory; sublime man! cried I, impartial posterity will forgive thee for having been a conqueror! Yes, in this august circle art thou expiating all thy warlike exploits!—I attached myself so closely to that prince, that I determined to establish myself in France, and live under the laws I had heard discussed and decreed. But I disliked the court, and was averse to remain there. I purchased some land and an old castle in this province, and here I have fixed my abode. For several years past I have never quitted the spot, unless to accompany Charlemagne in such of his warlike expeditions as did not appear to be unjust; that is, whenever his enemies attacked him without provocation; for I began to think, that defensive war alone was consonant with justice; hence has he never been able to prevail on me to take arms against the Saxons.

I spent at my castle a part of the year, which preceded that of the treaty of alliance between Charlemagne and Witikind; towards the end of summer, I was one evening retired to my closet, where a servant informed me, that a young and unknown lady, who had lost her way in the woods, was come to solicit hospitality for the night; he added, that she was mounted upon a palfrey, and was unattended. I hastened to give her welcome, and found her in the garden under a row of elms; on hearing me approach (for the darkness was such that objects were not to be distinguished) she advanced and made many apologies for the trouble, she feared, she was going to give me; the tone  
of

of her voice preposseſſed me in her favour, and ſtrongly excited my curioſity to ſee her. After the firſt compliments were over, I propoſed to ſhow her to her apartment, but ſhe praiſed the coolneſs and beauty of the evening, and we continued in the garden; ſhe accepted my arm, and we began to walk. I intended to conduct her out of the grove into an open place, where, notwithſtanding the gloom of the night, I could have had a glimpe of her face, but in the middle of the walk ſhe perceiving a ſeat ſat down; and I placed myſelf at her ſide. We converſed together for more than an hour, and I was equally ſurprized and enchanted with her underſtanding and wit. We aſked each other many queſtions; mine ſhe always eluded, but her own were flattering, and proved that ſhe knew me by reputation. At length it was time to retire to the caſtle: the more I was delighted with her converſation, the more was I deſirous of ſeeing her; however, I conjectured ſhe was not pretty, becauſe ſhe had ſhown ſo little earneſtneſs to be looked at, and the idea produced a diſagreeable ſenſation. I aroſe and offered her my arm; ſhe ſighed and laid her hand on mine; that hand was ſo ſoft and delicate, that I had no doubt of its beauty; but I perceived that ſhe trembled: I felt myſelf affected, was quite at a loſs what to think of this adventure, and diſquietude began to ſucceed to aſtoniſhment.—The ſtranger kept ſilence, and, as we approached the caſtle, her agitation appeared to increaſe; my thoughts became ſtill more perplexed, and I not only began to conclude ſhe was ugly, but that ſhe had alſo ſome monſtrous deformity about her perſon; and this idea brought tears into my



eyes. She appeared so amiable and interesting, that I sincerely felt for the misfortune I had ascribed to her, and partook of all her embarrassment. At the door of the mansion we were met by servants with lighted torches; I cast my eyes with trepidation upon my unknown guest, but could not see her face; it was concealed under a veil of thick gauze, a circumstance that gave the finishing stroke to my conjectures. We came to the apartment which was allotted her; in the middle of which a table was spread with refreshments; the servant placed the lights upon it and retired.

“ When we were alone, the stranger turned towards me, and appeared to look at me with great attention; for she could see through her gauze veil. During this examination I admired the elegance and slenderness of her form, and the beauty of her hand and arm; and I remained transfixed with curiosity, surprise, and emotion. After considerable silence, she exclaimed: *O fatal imprudence!*—On uttering these words she staggered, she endeavoured to lean upon the table, her feeble hand could not support her, and she sunk down upon the floor. My astonishment is not to be expressed; I rushed towards her, and perceived she was in a swoon; it was necessary to take off her veil, that she might breathe with greater freedom. I hesitated however; I was fearful to look at her face, which she had seemed so desirous to conceal; whatever was her motive, it was my duty to respect it, and not take the advantage of the situation she was in, in order to steal a sight of her. But at length, as I observed she no longer drew her breath, or showed any signs of life, my fears overcame my delicacy; I removed the veil which covered



vered her face and part of her person—but what was my surprise on seeing a young creature of transcendent beauty!—the disorder her fall had occasioned added still to her charms, her fine long black hair was all dishevelled—the handkerchief which covered her neck had fallen off, and exposed to view the most beautiful bosom in the world.—If the wit and graces of this dangerous stranger had the power of interesting me to such a degree, under the idea I had formed of her face, you may judge, my dear Ifambard, what I felt at the scene I have been describing!—In contemplating the unknown charmer I had forgotten to administer any assistance; her eyes were shut, but as she had all the freshness of health about her, she looked more like a person asleep than fainting. I knelt down by her, and supported her head on my arm—I then lifted her gently up and laid her upon a couch; and again kneeling at her side, I threw water on her face, and in a few minutes she opened her eyes. Her first look startled me; I held her by the hand, I kissed it with rapture, but I remarked such natural and modest confusion, and embarrassment in her countenance, that I was constrained to conceal all I felt at my heart. I ventured, however, to ask some questions; I could obtain no reply; the lady kept her two hands upon her face, and remained in obstinate silence. In about half an hour she intreated me, with a feeble tremulous voice, to leave her to herself; I obeyed, and retired the most astonished, and the most enamoured of men.

“ I did not close my eyes the whole night; I arose with the day, and waited with impatience the hour of the lady’s waking; at last, at ten o’clock I obtained

permission to visit her in her chamber. I found her a thousand times more beautiful than she had appeared the night before; an air of languor and melancholy had added new graces to her mien; she seemed embarrassed at my approach; but after a moment's silence, growing a little composed, 'I ought, Sir,' said she, 'to explain to you, at least in part, the singularity of my conduct. I implore your indulgence—I stand in great need of it—here she sighed, and without leaving me time to reply; I was born, continued she, with a lively imagination, a great share of vivacity, and a heart of too great sensibility.—For more than a year past I have continually heard of your adventures, Sir, and your exploits. In the character of Oger the Dane, I found every thing that could interest me and captivate my imagination, and I perceived an originality in it that strongly excited my curiosity—In short, Sir, I was extremely desirous to be acquainted with you—shall I avow it? I knew that you lived in this solitude, and I have undertaken a long journey on purpose to see you.—I took the advantage of a few moments of liberty, which chance afforded me, for I am under the dominion of a ruthless guardian, who tyrannises over me; but I have found means to elude his attention, and can frame a plausible pretext to remain here three days, at the end of which I shall be forced'——

“No, no,” replied I, interrupting her and throwing myself at her feet; ‘if what I hear be not an illusion, you will not quit this place, of which you are the sovereign; you deigned to take an interest in me, when you knew me only by name; and, as for me,

Madam, without knowing yours, I adore you and make you the arbiter of my destiny.' 'O generous Oger,' replied she, letting fall a few tears, 'be persuaded that my heart, which first felt the impression, is capable of answering yours, but an invincible obstacle'——'And what,' cried I, in dismay, 'is not your hand at your own disposal?' 'I am at liberty,' replied she, 'and I shall be the absolute mistress of myself, and of an ample fortune, in the course of eight months; till that time the peculiarity of my situation, my honour, and the sacred obligations of gratitude, oblige me to conceal from you whom I am, and to bid you farewell in three days: make no further inquiries of me, you shall know every thing in time; but I should be undeserving of your esteem, if, at the present moment, I unveiled this extraordinary mystery.' 'Ah! if you love me,' replied I, 'what signifies the rest to me?'——'If I love you! after the imprudent step I have taken, after the situation in which you have seen me, can you have the ingratitude to doubt it?'——'And yet you are determined to leave me in three days?'——'Yes, but at the end of eight months I will return and consecrate to you my whole life.'——'O! is not this a dream that deludes me? is it really true—is it your intention?'——'Yes, I swear by that love and folly, which have led me hither, and which have guided me better than reason could have done.'

"These words she uttered with as much feeling as grace; such kind of vows, however, did not appear serious enough to give me much encouragement. I complained of it, and she replied in so tender a manner, that my intoxication was increased, and my head completely

completely turned. But in vain did I renew my questions, and conjured her to speak with confidence relative to her situation; she remained unmoved; and only confessed, that on her arrival, not knowing whether my person and understanding would correspond with the idea she had formed of me, she had ordered the single attendant, who had accompanied her within two hundred paces of the castle, to return to the place where she had slept the preceding night, and to wait for her there with the rest of her suite, observing to him, that if she did not rejoin them on the next morning, he was to return for her in four days. 'For,' continued she, 'if sympathy had not decided our fate, you would never have been acquainted with my folly; on the very evening of my arrival I should have asked you for a guide, and should have bidden you farewell the next morning at break of day.'

"I listened to my unknown charmer, and gazed at her with a degree of rapturous astonishment, which must have given me an air of stupidity; I thought I was dreaming; it was in truth a dream, but unhappily it impressed my heart in a manner never, perhaps, to be effaced. The lady assured me she could not mention the name of her family, but protested her own name was AMINTA, and that she had never gone by any other appellation. To the embarrassment, which she had at first shown, now succeeded a degree of confidence and gaiety, that gave her new charms; I admired the inexhaustible variety of her wit, and I confess I was a little alarmed at the astonishing flexibility of character, which rendered her so interesting, but which, in spite of myself, inspired I know not what kind



kind of distrust, which all her protestations were not able to remove.

“ This day passed away with inconceivable rapidity. In the evening, after supper was over, we went into the garden; the beauty of the moonlight gave her a desire to walk over the fields, and I conducted her to the lawn that surrounds this cottage (which did not then exist.) We sat down upon a verdant carpet encompassed with fruit-trees, and situate at thirty steps distance from the fountain where you found me yesterday; it was near midnight. Aminta, whose vivacity and gaiety seemed to have been every instant increasing since the decline of the day, fell suddenly into the softest languor.—‘ Every thing sleeps in this peaceful spot,’ said she, ‘ both the domestics of the castle, and the inhabitants of the village; it appears as if we were alone in the universe; charming and dangerous illusion!’ The plaintive tone in which she uttered these words, imparted to my imagination and senses a disorder which I had never before experienced.—‘ Oger,’ resumed she, ‘ let us return to the castle.’ ‘ And why?’ cried I, snatching her to my arms.—‘ Ah,’ answered she, ‘ because love may dare every thing here.’ Thrown off my guard by this reply, I forgot that I had promised to respect her youth, the confidence she placed in me, and the sacred laws of hospitality!—Aminta, made no resistance to my fortunate audacity—her weakness endeared my happiness; I fancied I saw the cause and the excuse of it, in the tenderness of her sentiments, and the impetuosity of her passion. Aminta, agreeably to her promise continued two days longer, but she departed on the fourth,  
in



in spite of the excess of my love and regret; she obstinately persisted in concealing all her secrets from me, and I obtained from her nothing farther than tender adieus and faithless vows. I conducted her myself to the place she had mentioned, which was two leagues distant from the spot; she required my word of honour that I would not secretly follow her, and that on leaving her I should immediately return to my castle; I scrupulously fulfilled this engagement, and thus it was that we parted.

“Eight months elapsed, and then four more, without bringing me any account of Aminta; I loved her passionately, and it was with inexpressible grief, that I gave up the hopes of seeing her again. Being recalled to Denmark, by my father, I returned thither. Sigefroy was no longer living; Godefroy had just succeeded him; but I found the kingdom in the same state of tranquillity, because the policy and principles of the court were still the same. Witikind in vain endeavoured by his agents to prevail upon the sage Godefroy to break the neutrality, for the Saxons had again revolted; the last reply of Godefroy appeared to me so noble, and I read it over so often, that it is forever engraved on my memory; I am certain you would like to know it, and here I give it you:

THE REPLY OF THE KING OF DENMARK TO  
WITIKIND.

‘No, Witikind, I have not forgotten our ancient friendship, I have changed neither my sentiments nor my opinions; I have ever considered the war undertaken against the Saxons as unjust; and I have constantly

stantly blamed the excesses into which that warlike nation has frequently run. But are those less to be reprehended, who, with the view of enslaving them, have carried fire and sword into their territories, and excited so many factions and disorders among them? Tired at length with the havocks of war, and disgusted at the crimes which hatred and vengeance have instigated your countrymen to commit, you have prevailed upon the nation of which you are the chief, to bend beneath the yoke of the emperor: that nation immersed in the grossest barbarism was independent; but it wanted those principles, and that knowledge, which are necessary to establish a durable freedom. It had no laws, while the greatest man of the age exhibited the most admirable system of legislation. Hence, Witikind, you will be excused in the eye of posterity: you yielded to admiration, and you imagined, that all Saxony would partake of your enthusiasm for the emperor: you have been deceived, the country is again risen in arms, and the war, which you flattered yourself you had terminated, rages again with more fury than ever. You urge me to break the neutrality, which I have preserved to the present moment. I cannot do it, for I repeat, that my opinions are still the same. You tell me the cause of the emperor is now become that of every king, and that if Saxony triumph, all sovereigns must tremble for their own situation. I could satisfy myself in merely replying, that I hold justice dearer than my crown; but I will add, that, in the present case, sound policy solely directs my choice. The prodigious emigration of the Saxons, the long war which they have sustained, and their  
heroic

heroic resistance, have attracted the notice of all Europe, and served to propagate in every country their ideas of independency; the evil therefore (if it be an evil) is irreparable, and the entire ruin of Saxony will prove no remedy for it \*. It appears to me then, that, in the present age particularly, princes, who are desirous of preserving their authority, are guilty of strange folly in taking any part in a war which must strip them of their troops, exhaust their finances, and load their subjects with taxes. And is it by involving a nation in ruin, in creating multitudes of dissatisfied people, in lavishing the blood and treasure of our subjects, that we can reasonably hope to avert a revolution? To preserve peace and abundance in their dominions, to encourage arts and promote commerce, to rule with justice, and approve themselves humane and generous, such, be persuaded, is the true policy of kings; and such shall be mine to the latest hour of my life. You deplore the cruelties and the crimes which have sullied the party against which you are combating; if such accounts be true, beware lest you yourself should imitate the example; either do not reproach your enemies with it, or do not countenance them by making horrible reprisals!—I address you with frankness, and I shall maintain this reply with firmness. I will not violate the rights of hospitality in banishing out of my dominions refugees who commit no disorders; I have no enemies but those of my country, nor will I take up arms but in defence of it;

\* This reasoning would have proved infinitely more forcible, had the art of printing been known in those days.

fears and terrours are the lot of tyrants; I have no suspicions and no resentments, because I hate despotism; and my conduct, my sentiments, and the purity of my intentions secure me the love and fidelity of my subjects.'

"Such was the answer of the sage Godefroy to Witi-kind. His conduct has proved the sincerity of his declarations, and Denmark has remained in perfect neutrality (6). I continued a few months only with my father; the unsurmountable disquietude of a wild and unhappy attachment soon induced me to return to France. Conceiving, that I might perhaps meet my unknown beauty at the court of Charlemagne, I repaired to Aix-la-Chapelle. I arrived there the day on which the emperor gave audience to the ambassadors of the caliph Aaron, that celebrated despot, who, assisted by the virtue and talents of his grand vizier, the illustrious Barmecide, governed with justice and glory, but who has since tarnished all the splendour of his reign by the murder of that minister, whose fate has thrown the eastern world into mourning and consternation \*. On the morrow of my arrival, I attended the queen Hermengarde, where I knew all the ladies of the court were assembled. Judge of my astonishment and confusion, when, in the course of a few minutes I discovered my faithless Aminta, seated beside the beauti-

\* Barmecide was in truth the greatest man, who ever had the misfortune to serve a despot. Historians have been very copious in their praise of the caliph Aaron. In the course of this work will appear part of his history, and his character drawn from the actions of his life, and consequently very different from that which history gives him.



ful Celanira. I changed countenance to such a degree, that Angilbert, who was speaking to me, imagined I was taken ill.—I showed him the person who caused so violent an emotion, and asking him who she was, he replied, that her name was Armoflede.” At this part of the story, Hambard could not refrain from breaking into a loud fit of laughter; he begged Oger to pardon the interruption, and entreating him to proceed, Oger continued in these terms. “ My eyes caught those of Armoflede, who looked at me without any kind of confusion; I saw her even inquire who I was, as if she had been totally unacquainted with my person. I drew near her, and seizing a moment in which we were not observed, I requested in a whisper that she would give me a private interview; she seemed surprised at the request, but however, answered that she would see me at her own apartments on the next day at five in the afternoon.

“ This promise almost reconciled me to her, although I was extremely piqued and confounded at her dissimulation; but my heart again excused her, and told me, that I ought not to condemn her unheard. I retired, for I could no longer support her calm and serene deportment, and the coldness of her looks. You may easily imagine I did not pass a very tranquil night, and that before the hour of five on the following afternoon I was at Armoflede’s door. I was shown into a large closet, where I found her alone; my first movement was to fly to her with open arms, but she darted to the other side of the chamber, with an expression of surprise and fear, which absolutely petrified me; she screened herself behind a table, and remained standing  
and

and looking at me in a steadfast manner; I became mute and motionless with astonishment. At length breaking silence, 'And how!' cried I, 'is it thus that Aminta should receive Oger?'—'Aminta!' replied she, still looking at me with the greatest attention; 'good God! Sir, what do you mean?' She uttered these words with so much frankness, that I was quite thunderstruck.—I made no answer, but perceiving her to look towards the door, and that she had a design to make her escape, I rushed forward and held her by her robe; she turned pale, she blushed and sunk into an arm chair: 'O God!' said she, 'his head is turned, what will become of me?'—These words were pronounced in so unaffected a manner, that my astonishment still increased; the strangest doubts began to arise in my mind, and produced the greatest fluttering at my heart that I had ever felt. 'Aminta,' said I, in a stammering voice; 'do you dare to assert you are not Aminta?' 'Alas, Sir, replied she, I am any thing you please, I will neither offend nor contradict you; but only give me leave to go out a moment.' I must confess, Isambard, that I was totally at a loss what to think, I discovered in the movement of her features and the inflexion of her voice, such an indication of truth as every moment multiplied my doubts; I looked at her with an air of stupidity, and, whether it were prejudice or reality (for I am yet under some degree of uncertainty on that point) I will not venture to determine, but I remarked a difference between her and Aminta; it seemed to me, that Armossede was taller, had a nobler mien, her countenance was less striking and intelligent, and she had less charms and vivacity  
in

in her manner. I had frequently heard of miraculous resemblances; it did not appear impossible therefore that Armosede might not be my unknown fair one. I concealed my doubts from her, and entered into an explanation, recalling to her memory every thing that had passed between us. Her looks were expressive of the most genuine surprise, and when I had left off speaking; 'Indeed, Sir,' said she, 'notwithstanding this inconceivable resemblance which has deluded you, I may venture to say, that had you made any inquiry respecting my reputation and conduct, you never could have confounded me with the person you have been describing.'

"This reply, delivered in a dignified and spirited manner, served to redouble my embarrassment. After some minutes silence: 'At least Madam,' replied I, 'in order to believe you, I must give up the evidence of my own eyes.' 'I confess, Sir,' said she, 'that I have never given credit to the accounts of perfect resemblances, in spite of all the instances recorded in history; and I am persuaded, that, if you examine me without prejudice, you will find me very different from your Aminta.' 'Ah,' cried I, 'the more I look at you, the more am I attached to my error—if it be one!'—'Hear me Sir,' replied she, 'I perceive that you are really in earnest, and it is therefore my duty to destroy an illusion, which is as painful to you, as offensive to myself; the story of my life may undeceive you; and here it is in two words. From my infancy I have been passionately in love, and beloved again. For my sake, has the amiable and generous Oliver refused the hand of the princess Emma; in fine,  
Sir,

Sir, a secret bond has united me with him more than eight months past.—Out of respect to the princess, I do not yet assume the name of my husband; but this marriage is no longer a mystery, and every body can vouch the truth of what I am now telling you.’ This discourse was a thunder stroke to me, and in an instant convinced me beyond all doubt, that Armofede was not Aminta. I quickly terminated this painful interview, and retired with equal confusion and mortification. I made enquiries concerning Armofede: the story of Oliver and Emma was in every one’s mouth, and I was assured that Armofede was actually the wife of Oliver. How could I then believe that a woman beloved, as she was, by a young and handsome knight, so distinguished by the graces of his mind, and renowned for his various exploits, could prove false and perjured, and for the sake of a man she was unacquainted with?—In spite of all this reasoning, when I saw Armofede again, I relapsed into a state of incertitude. I must, however, confess, that the more I observed her, the less I descried the manners and turn of mind which I had remarked in Aminta, but I found her face so perfectly like, that after looking steadfastly at it, I no longer doubted that Armofede and Aminta were one and the same person. I then broke out into a rage, and acted some very ridiculous scenes, many of which have been made public. Armofede, without betraying the slightest degree of embarrassment, at one moment would lament my folly, at another, turn it into ridicule; and her countenance, her ease, and her conversation overawed me to such a degree, that I finished by acknowledging I had been raving. Her  
passion



passion for Oliver pierced my soul; desperately in love with a woman, who pretended not to know me, jealous even to madness without daring to discover it, betrayed and yet not allowed to complain, I was playing a part which was equally ridiculous and distressing; but a secret desire detained me at court. A tournament was approaching in honour of prince Egbert, and I intended to measure lances with Oliver (7). In that combat, you well know, I neither acquired glory nor obtained vengeance; I was overcome, and taking my resolution, I prepared for my departure on that very night, and left the court the following day with an intention never to return. I undertook a long journey, during which I passed through the village you mentioned yesterday; there I saw the interesting Zoe and her faithful Lubin; there I found that virtue and happiness, which I had vainly sought in camps, in cities, and at courts; I became passionately fond of a country life, thither I came, and abandoning my castle, I made myself the equal of the peasants of whom I had been the lord; I adopted their manners and way of life, and built this cottage upon the very lawn on which the faithless Aminta seemed to have partaken my passion.— My squire, who was neither undeceived respecting the world nor glory, quitted me; I have retained my little page only, whom I have metamorphosed into a swain; I turned shepherd with him, and being determined to fix myself in the condition I had chosen, I intended to look out for a companion among the shepherdesses of this canton. In the daughter of one of my late farmers, I have discovered every thing that could captivate and secure a heart not pre-engaged. Innocence,

cence, virtue, grace, and beauty, all those happy gifts of nature, are possessed by Chloe; but I do not yet feel myself worthy of her hand, and I refrain from marrying her, until the remembrance of Aminta be entirely effaced from my mind."

## CHAPTER II.

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*A PHILOSOPHER IN LOVE.*

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This devil beauty is compounded strangely,  
 It is a subtil point and hard to know.  
 Whether 't has in 't more active tempting  
 Or more passive tempted; so soon it forces  
 And so soon it yields.

SIR JOHN SUCKLING.

WHEN Oger had finished his story, Ifambard went in quest of Oliver, who had risen an hour before, and was walking in the garden. To what a degree does misfortune sometimes render us unjust! Oliver, as he walked under the window of Oger's closet, had heard Ifambard laugh, and that fit of laughter had thrown him into a state of ill humour and discontent, which proved too powerful for the control of reason; he had agreed the preceding evening not to continue his journey till after dinner, but, in opposition to the pressing instances of Oger, he was now determined to set off immediately.

During the rest of that day and the following one he continued in such melancholy mood, that the generous Ifambard would not venture to urge him to go on with his deplorable story. Let us leave them to pursue their route, and return to Armoflede, whom we had left escaping from the inn where the impetuous

Adalgise had disturbed her tête-à-tête with Isambard. The reader must remember she was on horseback, and had taken a guide. She recollected, that Oger's castle was in this canton, and but two or three days journey distant. Dreading to fall into the hands of Adalgise, she made no hesitation to go and throw herself under the protection of the Danish knight. She had found him so credulous, so generous, and amorous, that she had no doubt of the success of her plan. But the fancy she had taken for him had long since subsided; and at the present moment the amiable Isambard engrossed her ardent imagination: she imagined herself deeply enamoured of the latter, and she was averse to act over again the part of Aminta, and determined to appear before Oger only under her own name. Arriving at the castle about two hours after the departure of the Knights of the Swan, she was much surprised to find the mansion deserted and falling into ruin. But a peasant she met informed her, that Oger's new abode was five hundred paces from that place. Thither she repaired, and recognized the lawn, nor did she observe without some emotion to what degree the enamoured Oger had taken delight to ornament the spot; her astonishment was extreme, when she set her foot in the elegant cottage. Oger was not within; Sylvan ran to call him, and he appeared in the course of a few minutes. At the sight of Armossede he was struck motionless, while she on her part was not a little surprised to perceive Oger in the garb of a shepherd. This disguise appeared in her eyes so ludicrous and original, that she could not refrain from bursting into a fit of laughter. Oger in great indignation loaded her



with reproaches; Armoflede ftill continued to laugh. Oger with his fcrip and crook, holding forth in fo tragical a ftyle, feemed fo comic and ridiculous to her, that fhe totally forgot the ballad fhe had compofed and intended to exhibit; all fhe could now do, was to ftare at him, to liften to him, and to laugh in the moft inconfiderate and obftreperous manner. Oger feized her haftily by the hand, and leading her to a window which overlooked the country; “ O thou moft audacious and moft ungrateful of women,” faid he, “ caft thy eyes upon that lawn, doft thou not recollect it?” Armoflede by way of reply fnatched up a lute which lay upon a table near her, and renouncing her firft determination in order to give way to the gaiety which now infpired her, fhe fang the following madrigal.

Obscurely does remembrance tell  
That once, in yonder confcious dell,  
When I thy tender vows receiv'd,  
I fware to love thee whilft I liv'd.  
And on that verdant lawn reclined,  
My eyes betrayed my love-fick mind:  
But then in folly's maze I ftayed,  
Ah! why believe a giddy maid?  
And why enraged doft thou complain  
Of altered faith and proud difdain?  
What hafty vows can binding prove?  
I raved when thus I fware to love.

Armoflede had a charming voice, and warbled this fong with a grace which would have turned a better head than Oger's. “ O true fyren,” exclaimed he, “ feducing, audacious and perjured.”—“ Indeed feignior,”

nior," said Armoflede, interrupting him, "you wander exceedingly from the pastoral style; all these violent emotions are out of place in an eclogue or idyl, and if you be determined to go on in this tragic strain, for heaven's sake quit your crook and resume your armour." "No," replied Oger, "I have eternally renounced all my former errors."—"And the fine device you were so fond of," said Armoflede, "*glory and love*, do you renounce that too?" "Glory," replied Oger, "is nothing more in my eyes, but a chimera, and as for love, it would be in my case so contemptible a weakness—but what am I saying—no, I may still without blushing be enamoured, for I have made a new choice."—"A shepherdes without doubt?"—"Truly so, and she is eighteen, and is beautiful, ingenuous and tender."—"And, what is the name of this rare object?"—"Chloe."—"Does that name appear to you as charming as that of Aminta?"—"Aminta is forgotten, I recollect Armoflede only; judge whether I be not cured." At this, Armoflede changed countenance and assumed an air of astonishment. Oger, whom she looked full in the face, beheld her with amaze; and after a moment's silence: "I believe," said she, resuming her discourse, "that there is some misunderstanding here. I at first thought, that your anger arose only from my long absence, but it appears, that you want to persuade me that you take me for Armoflede?" At these words Oger put on a disdainful smile: "You are Aminta then?" replied he. "Do you dare to maintain to me," cried Armoflede in a violent manner, "that you still think Aminta and Armoflede are not two different persons?"—"And you yourself," said

Oger, "if you be Aminta, how came you acquainted with my adventures with Armofede?"—"Can it be," replied she, "that you are ignorant of what has made such noise? Is it possible you do not know, that after having searched in vain for you here, I went to the court of Charlemagne: that every body saw Aminta and Armofede together, that in fact their resemblance is striking, but not to such a degree, however, that a lover may be held excusable for having mistaken one for the other. The languid, insipid Armofede is much taller than I am, her hair is not of so deep a black, and her looks and tone of voice are entirely different; in fine, she is older than I."—"What a tale are you telling me?" cried Oger, interrupting her; "all the court of Charlemagne has been witness to this prodigy, and I have just seen the Knights of the Swan, who made no mention of it?"—"It could not be otherwise," replied Armofede, "they have been travelling for eight months past, and I arrived at court some days after their departure. But you do not speak of Angilbert, you have seen him, however, since that period?"—"No, I vow I have not."—"You deceive me, for I saw him set off to repair to this place, and certainly he made mention to you of Armofede and Aminta. I would not follow him, I was exasperated that you had taken Armofede for me.—I was resolved to forget you, and I came here, I confess, to brave you.—I find you faithless, I expected it; but at least, do not add deceit to inconsistency, or pretend ignorance of the unhappy Aminta!" On finishing these words, she melted into tears.—O! who can doubt the sincerity of the tears of her we love?—Oger subdued fell at her feet, and  
Armofede

Armossede received him into her arms.—From this moment she resumed her supreme ascendancy over him; Oger happy and enamoured set no bounds to his credulity, and Armossede managed him with sovereign sway. She had come to him without any intention of renewing an engagement, which was no longer alluring, but an instant of gaiety and folly led her to forget her determination; afterwards, finding the indignation of Oger stronger than his passion, and hearing mention made of a rival, she was sensible she could not regain her empire over his heart and mind but in having recourse to all the blandishments of love, and hence she resolved to become Aminta again. The squire of Isambard, who had been questioned by her, had declared that his matter was going to the duchy of Cleves to enrol himself in the number of Beatrice's defenders, and thither was Armossede desirous of going. Whenever an idea took possession of her imagination, she calculated neither the inconveniencies nor difficulties that attended it; she passionately longed to see Isambard again, and to get the better of his prejudices against her: all her wish was now to prevail on Oger to conduct her to the duchess. It was no difficult task to interest him in favour of that princess, and to rekindle in his mind the love of glory. "It is not Iphis," said she, "that Aminta is come to seek, it is a hero whom she loved; Oger the Dane alone can justify her passion and her weakness. Restore to me my lover, and in order to defend innocence and beauty, resume your brilliant arms; it is just, that she who engages you to fly to the succour of an oppressed woman, should have the honour of arming you knight." Thus



speaking, Armoflede took down the arms from the trophy which hung from the ceiling, and presented Oger with his lance and shield. He consented to every thing, and their departure was fixed for the next day; young Sylvan quitted his rural garb without pain; Armoflede borrowed some of his clothes and dressed herself as a page, for it was under this disguise that she wished to accompany Oger. The following day at sun rise, Oger, attended by his two pretty pages, abandoned his peaceable retreat without regret, and took the road to the duchy of Cleves.

## CHAPTER III

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 PIETY.
 

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Quel charme, vainqueur du monde.  
 Vers Dieu m'élève aujourd'hui!  
 Malheureux l'homme qui fonde  
 Sur les hommes son appui.  
 Leur gloire fuit et s'efface  
 En moins de tems que la trace  
 Du vaisseau qui fend les mers,  
 Ou de la flèche rapide  
 Qui loin de l'oeil qui la guide,  
 Cherche l'oiseau dans les airs.

RACINE.

Solò e pensofo, i piu diferti campi.  
 Vu misurando a passi tardi e lenti  
 E gli occhi porto per fuggir intenti.  
 Dove vestigio uman la rena stampi.

PETRARCH.

THE first day of Oger's journey was spent very agreeably. Armofledede did not suffer the conversation to languish: she took much notice of young Sylvan: she observed, that he was pensive and frequently sighed; and had learnt, that he was in love with Chloe. Sylvan was handsome, lively, and frank. Armofledede, in order to charm the tediousness of a long and troublesome journey, had formed the project of consoling him. The party intended to sleep at a small town called Altendorf, but arriving at the foot of mount Eitel, they descried a pretty house upon its summit. Armo-

fede was much fatigued; they made inquiry of a peasant who was going by, and were informed, that the master of that house was a holy person, and never refused hospitality; and the three travellers determined to pass the night under his roof. They climbed the mountain, and, arriving at the door of the holy man's habitation, perceived, that what they had taken for a house was a handsome chapel, and that the house, which was situate behind that building, was a simple hermitage only. They knocked at the door, which was opened by a child of ten or twelve years old. He conducted the strangers into a neat chamber, and leaving them, said he was going to look for his master. They expected to see a venerable old man, with a long white beard, make his appearance; but what was the surprise of Armofede and her companions, at the entrance of a handsome young man, with a fine countenance, which was rendered still more interesting by its paleness and melancholy cast. Oger named himself, and introduced Armofede, under the appellation of Philenus, as one of his pages. At the name of Oger the Dane, the unknown recluse embraced him, and appeared delighted to receive such a guest. After the first compliments were over they reciprocally began to ask questions. Oger said he was going to Cleves to the assistance of the duchess, who was besieged by Gerold and the confederate princes. At this information the young and handsome hermit showed some emotion, and the tear glistened in his eye. Oger's curiosity was excited to such a degree, that he entreated him to mention what interest he took in that event. "I have no reason," replied the hermit, "for concealing

cealing my misfortunes or my name, and even if I usually made a mystery of them, I should be soothed in unbofoming my heart to a hero, who is as renowned for his loyalty and virtues, as his valourous exploits. I shall, therefore, sir, relate my sorrowful story when the frugal meal, I am going to offer you, is over; that story will display the true cause of Gerold's capricious conduct; a conduct, with the motives of which Beatrice herself is still unacquainted, and which brought on the war you are going to engage in." As the hermit was speaking, a venerable priest entered the room, the hermit presented him to Oger, informing the knight, that the old man had educated him: "He is the only friend I have left," continued he, "and he supplies the place of every thing I have lost." The hermit, as he thus spoke, seemed to be much affected, and after a moment's silence resuming his discourse—"Generous Oger," said he, "you seem to feel for my situation, yet I am not to be lamented; painful recollections sometimes distress me, but my soul is calm and peaceful; religion, and the paternal tenderness of this virtuous man, have at length healed the deep wounds of my heart." Every word the recluse uttered endeared him in the estimation of Oger, and quickened the curiosity of Armoslede. They sat down to table: the recluse placed himself between Oger and Armoslede; the latter frequently caught his attention by her charming countenance, her innocent and infantine air, and the feeling manner with which she seemed to listen to him. After supper the recluse related his history, which will be found in the following chapter.



## CHAPTER IV (8).

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*THE STORY OF MEINRAD.*

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Injustissimo amor, perchè si raro  
 Corrispondenti fai nostre desiri?  
 Onde perfido avvien che t'è si caro  
 Il discorde voler che in due cor si miri?

ARIOSTO'S *Orlando Furioso*.

“ MY name is Meinrad; Bertold, my father, of the house of the counts of Hohenzollern, bestowed on me an excellent education, and furnished me with the best requisite towards it, by giving me Oswald for my preceptor, that respectable man whom you see here, and who now partakes my solitude. I was closely united in friendship, from my tenderest infancy, with Gerold, count of Bavaria, the prince who is the lover and persecutor of the duchess of Cleves. There was little conformity in our dispositions and principles, but Gerold, notwithstanding his errors and his faults, was born with a tender and generous soul, and I became strongly attached to him. During our early youth, I was the confidant of his weaknesses and follies; and at length I was also of an attachment which reason approved. His passion for Beatrice was sincere and violent; he loved her to distraction, and love, by engrossing his whole soul, appeared to finish his character and produce a total change in his manners. While he was yet at the court of that princess, I was, for the first

first time, at a castle my father had just purchased. One day, as I was walking in its environs, I passed by a small lone house, the elegant simplicity of which struck me. While I was surveying it, I heard on a sudden the sound of a most enchanting voice; I drew near to a room on the ground floor, the windows and curtains of which were shut. A person was singing in the room, and I could easily distinguish a young female voice, which was accompanied by a lute. The clearness, the incomparable beauty of the voice, and the expression of her singing, caused an emotion in my breast, which I had never before experienced.—When she had finished the song, I heard her sigh, and after a moment's silence: 'Alas!' cried she, 'I shall sing no more, a fortnight hence, I shall then be too unhappy!'——'And why,' replied another female, 'did you give your consent?'—'O! I gave it not,' answered the first voice, 'but I was obliged to yield to authority, to violence; I will obey—and will die—and except you, my good Magdalen, no one laments poor Maria.' Here they ceased speaking, and I heard nothing now but sighs and sobs. At this moment a door was hastily opened, and I drew back with precipitation, with a heart and mind wholly taken up by what I had just been hearing. During the whole night I did not close my eyes, and thought of nothing but the unfortunate Maria. I conjectured, that her parents were bent upon forcing her to marry the man she hated, and that to this misfortune she joined that of loving another object. I imagined the authority of my father would prevent such barbarous violence, and I determined to return to the little mansion in  
order

order to make inquiry into this affair. Thither I repaired at the decline of the day; I drew near to the apartment without making any noise; I found the windows and curtains shut as before, and soon heard the soft sound of Maria's voice, who was holding converse with Magdalen. I heard the latter say to her—  
‘It is true he is very old and ugly, and beside that he is ill-humoured, as it is said, but you will be very rich; and that is a comfort!’—‘O! as for riches,’ said Maria, interrupting her, ‘they have their value in the opinion of my aunt; but, as to me, I care not for them, and you know it well.’—‘Don’t weep in that manner,’ replied Magdalen, ‘your aunt is coming; consider how she scolded you yesterday!’—  
‘If you be desirous,’ said Maria, ‘that I should weep no longer, teach me some expedient by which I may free myself from this cruel tyranny!’ As she pronounced these words, I opened the curtains a little way, and cried, ‘It is I, who will give you an infallible one.’ On hearing this, Maria gave a great shriek, and endeavoured to run away. Magdalen stopped her, and Maria, turning about to look, smiled at me; her cheeks were still wet with tears, and she remained standing without speaking a word, and continually looking at me. Imagine what must be my surprise, when I discovered the interesting Maria, who in a fortnight was to marry an old man, to be a young girl of fourteen; but more beautiful than I am able to describe. The innocence and simplicity of infancy added inexpressible charms to the graces of her person, and notwithstanding her sorrow, the serenity of her looks, and the sweetness of her smile, gave a celestial expression

expression to her countenance: yes, did angels condescend to assume a mortal shape, and to appear to mankind, it would be in the form of Maria! I was so disturbed, astonished, and affected, that I found myself unable to speak. Maria, after having looked at me for some moments, turned her eyes to Magdalen, who was a young girl of eighteen, and they both began to laugh in a hearty manner. Afterwards Maria looked again at me; and remarked, that far from partaking in her gaiety, I was making vain efforts to check my tears. Then she assumed a serious and plaintive air, and advanced some paces towards me. ‘You have heard then all I have spoken?’ said she.—‘Pardon me,’ replied I, ‘for having discovered your secrets, I shall take no advantage of them, but to serve you. I can venture to assure you, that you shall not marry the man you dislike; but tell me, fair Maria, have you no inclination to marry another? I should be happy to know it, in order to be useful to you in that respect.’ At these words, Maria looked at me with astonishment without saying a word, and I perceived that she made no reply to my question, because she did not understand it. Magdalen taking up the discourse: ‘Why, my God,’ said she, ‘would you have her think of being married, she is yet but fourteen!’ In truth, Maria’s age had induced me to imagine that her heart was free; but I was willing to obtain the full certainty of it. We now heard a noise; ‘’Tis my Aunt,’ said Maria, ‘go away, for if she see you here, perhaps she will scold.’ In order to obey Maria, I made a motion to retire; but having my head through the window, my hair became entangled



gled in the fringe of the curtain; and while I was making ineffectual efforts to disengage myself, Maria's aunt entered the room. Maria laughed violently at my embarrassment, and at the ridiculous figure I made; but her aunt, on perceiving me, thought she had discovered an intrigue, and advanced in a great passion towards her niece. Poor Maria, who was acquainted with the violence of her temper, ran and took refuge in the aperture of the window where I stood, and I instantly threw myself into the chamber. Gertrude, for that was the name of Maria's aunt, not being able to lay hold of her niece, whom I held in my arms, assailed me with a torrent of abuse, and then asked me who I was? 'I am Meinrad,' replied I, 'the son of Bertold, your lord, who will not suffer this innocent child to be the victim of your avarice or cruelty. I have learnt her story by chance, and I declare to you, that she shall not marry the old man you intend for her.'

"This short explanation entirely quieted Gertude; I perceived that my name added great weight to my discourse; she perplexed herself in excuses; she told me she had no intention to constrain Maria, for whom she had great affection; 'But, my lord,' continued she, 'this child, though born of honest parents, has nothing in the world; she is an orphan, I have taken her under my protection; it was all I was able to do; I have no fortune myself and could not provide for her. A wealthy man, who is not old, as Maria calls him, for he is not yet fifty, has solicited her hand; for her sake I was desirous the marriage should take place; but I was unacquainted with her repugnance

nance to it, and had she spoken to me with frankness, I should have entered into no engagement; I will, however, now take proper measures to cancel it without exposing the parties.' This declaration did not convince me, that the dissimulation and fault lay on the side of Maria; but I pretended to be satisfied with the apology. Maria clung round her aunt's neck, and thanked her with unaffected simplicity; she then flew to embrace Magdalen, as if it were to receive her congratulations upon the breaking off the marriage. I continued half an hour longer; and, on taking my leave of Gertude, I requested permission to see her again; and I quitted the house in such an agitation of mind, as left me no doubts respecting the state into which I was fallen. I had never been in love, and I was passionately fond of a child; that child had neither fortune nor birth, and I was but too well convinced that my father would never consent to such an union; the idea of working upon the avarice of Gertrude, and taking the advantage of the innocence and forlorn situation of Maria, inspired me with horror; but I felt that my destiny was for ever connected with hers. Maria was so young, that I could not indulge the hopes of marrying her for a year or two to come; and I flattered myself, that time and love would be able to furnish me with the means of softening my father, or afford me an opportunity of escaping from his authority. The next day I sent Maria two large baskets of fruit and flowers, and in the evening I paid her a visit; the moment I was in sight, she ran up to me, and, with a childish delight, told me she was very happy, that her aunt was exceedingly good, for the marriage was  
entirely

entirely broken off; she then thanked me for the flowers, and showed me how she had decked herself with them. After half an hour's conversation, Maria suddenly left me alone with her aunt, frisked out of the room and went to run about the garden. I prevailed upon Gertrude to go and join her, and we found her on the parterre at play with Magdalen—I became one of the party, she was much pleased at it, and the whole evening passed away in races, dancing, and sportive tricks. To please Maria I conducted myself in this manner on all my visits, although this childishness and excessive gaiety did not at all accord with my natural disposition; frequently she would reward my complaisance with a song; I could never grow weary of hearing her voice, that enchanting voice, the sweetest in all the world; she sang with such expression and sentiment, that then alone she did not seem a child; yet I sometimes caught her attention in relating an interesting story; and even in her play, in spite of her childishness and vivacity, she discovered a soul replete with goodness, elevation, and generosity.

“The more I saw her the more deeply I became enamoured. Gertrude had easily seen into my heart; my love was too flattering to her ambition, not to secure all her endeavours, were it possible, to augment it. As she seemed to be very fond of Maria, my prejudices against her gave way apace, and she soon became mistress of all my secrets. I declared to her my passion for her niece, and vowed I was irrevocably determined to marry her, if I could only flatter myself, that she partook of my sentiments; but I confessed

essed I was under great apprehensions in that respect. 'I know not,' continued I, 'whether it be my happy lot to be loved by Maria; she is yet too young to feel a passion like that she herself inspires; but if her heart could ever yield to its impulse, its tendency towards it may already be discovered, if it really existed, and I cannot see any thing in her that announces such a disposition. She expresses friendship for me, but she is so much at her ease in my presence, has such a fund of gaiety, such perfect equanimity, that nothing can less resemble love than the kind of attachment she discovers towards me. I am persuaded she would give me her hand without repugnance; but you must conceive, that it would prove insufficient either for her happiness or mine.' Gertrude smiled at my alarms, ridiculed them with much art, and dissipated them by relating several instances of Maria's partiality towards me. Gertrude had sense and address; I was young, without experience, and passionately in love; it was no difficult matter to persuade me of the truth of what I desired with so much ardour. The most common expressions and unmeaning action of Maria she would interpret with so much dexterity, and in a manner so highly flattering to me, that I gave myself up without distrust to the dear illusion they created. Six months passed away in this manner, at the expiration of which my father undertook a journey, and I was obliged to quit Maria for a while.

"About five weeks after my departure, my father declared, that he had fixed upon a wife for me. I knew the lady he destined for me, she had no fortune, but was high born, and nature likewise had been so unfavourable



favourable to her, that, even before I had seen Maria, I could not have forced myself to form such a connection. I fell at my father's feet to conjure him not to give me a wife whom it was not possible to love. He repeated, that it was the greatest alliance we could ever expect, and remained inflexible. At last he added, that he had given his word, and I must marry the lady in six months. I retired overwhelmed with despair, cursing the frivolous and inconceivable vanity, which preferred a name bestowed by chance, to beauty, talents, and virtue; and which sacrificed happiness to the most stupid of all prejudices. In this critical situation I should have done well to have consulted Oswald, that worthy friend who had brought me up; he would have given me useful counsel, which would have preserved me from the dreadful evils that my imprudence was laying up in store. I wanted confidence in him, and I have been severely punished for it. I had just received a letter from the count of Bavaria, who, agreeably to the command of the duchess of Cleves, had been travelling for some months past. He informed me, that it was his intention to come and pass the remaining part of his exile with me, and he actually arrived at the moment we returned to my father's castle. Gerold spoke of the duchess with enthusiasm, he adored her, and she engrossed all his thoughts; love had restored him to virtue, and made him despise, from the bottom of his heart, all the follies of his early youth. I entrusted him with my secret sorrow, and related to him all my story: he felt keenly for my situation, said he could not venture to give me advice; but that I might entirely dispose of his services. I hastened to  
Maria's

Maria's habitation, she received me with sensibility, I reviewed her with transport, I found her much grown, improved in her charms, and still as gay and unaffected as ever. At last, I declared my love, for hitherto, out of respect for her youth and innocence, I had unbosomed myself only to her aunt; I mentioned the rigour of my father, and the resolution I had taken to escape from that tyranny, to take my flight, and marry her in secret.

“ Maria listened with her accustomed serenity, without surprise and without emotion; but she answered me with an enchanting sweetness which I took for love; and Gertrude, with her usual address, did not fail to confirm me in that delusion. I took the count of Bavaria to Gertrude's habitation; he saw Maria, and found her such as the most passionate love had depicted. Gerold, full of gaiety and gracefulness, accommodated himself without effort to the childishness of Maria; but I remarked she was extremely reserved to him, and she betrayed a timidity which I had never perceived before. He wished to hear her sing, and I observed her blush and tremble; Gertrude, on the morrow, related to me that Maria had said, *I thought, perhaps, that stranger would tell Meinrad I did not sing well.* ‘ In every thing,’ added Gertrude, ‘ the manners of the prince do not please her, and she has conceived a kind of aversion to him; I believe, though she does not acknowledge it, that she entertains a kind of jealousy of the friendship you have for him.’ This discourse, which was greedily listened to, served to blind me respecting every thing, which would have opened my eyes, had I been free from prejudice.

In

In the mean while, time passed away, my father already began to make preparations for my nuptials, and it was necessary to take my resolution.

“ Gerold offered me an asylum in his dominions ; I accepted his offer, and it was agreed upon, that in six weeks I should hasten thither with Maria. But all on a sudden, in spite of all the precautions I had continually taken, my father discovered my assiduity to Maria, he spoke to me concerning it, and I conceived, that did I not remove his suspicions a little, he would have me watched, and my flight with Maria could not then possibly be effected. In consequence of this, I replied, that I had been there merely out of curiosity, to find out what could have so frequently drawn the count of Bavaria to that house. I added, that after his engagements with the duchess of Cleves, I could not believe he had any designs upon the young girl ; but yet my friendship for him made me consider this intercourse with concern, and that I was endeavouring to persuade him to avoid it. This account fully satisfied my father ; however, I learnt, that he had ordered my proceedings to be watched, and my embarrassment was now extreme. The count of Bavaria proposed to return into his dominions, through which (in setting off from the spot where we were) it was necessary to pass, in order to repair to Beatrice. The year of exile, prescribed by that princess, now drew towards its conclusion, and Gerold, whose happiness was near at hand, was to quit me in a few days.

“ After a thousand reflections upon my distressing situation, I thought of entrusting Maria to the care of Gerold, and to entrust her all alone, for her aunt, who had

had lain ill for several days, was not in a condition to accompany her. I, therefore, entreated Gerold to take Maria under his protection, to convey her into his dominions, and to leave her there in safety, when he should return to the dukes. ‘When you are gone,’ said I, ‘I will tell my father you have run away with Maria; I shall then be no longer watched, and shall be able in a short time to escape and join you,’ and the more so as I shall be alone, and my flight will be the easier.’ Gerold appeared astonished at this resolution, and I ought to confess that he combated it, and produced many reasonable objections; but as I could devise no other expedient than this to secure the possession of Maria, I persisted, and Gerold yielded to my importunity. We communicated this plan to Maria, who consented with extreme difficulty, and wept abundantly. I naturally believed, that the vexation she felt at not having me for her companion was the cause of her tears, and I was extremely affected at her sorrow!—Alas! for two months past I had no doubt of her tenderness; she was entirely changed, had lost all her gaiety, and I was convinced this change arose from the disquietude which this distressing embarrassment of our situation created in her mind. It appeared very natural to me, that every day should increase her grief, since every day brought that nearer which my father had fixed for my marriage.—At length, Maria departed with Gerold.—My father really believed that the prince had carried her off; he did not appear at all suspicious of me: I secretly prepared for my flight, and intended to escape the day after a wild boar chase, which my father was about to give,



give, had taken place, and to which he had invited all the nobility of the neighbourhood. The day being arrived, I accompanied my father to the hunt; and you may imagine how unfit I was to partake in the sport: the chase lasted six hours, when my father, desiring to terminate it, took upon himself, according to his custom, the task of attacking and destroying the boar. He alighted from his horse, and, armed with a spear, began the combat, while we all remained forty paces distant; my father missed his stroke, and the beast fell upon him with fury. I instantly flew to the succour of my father, who had already received several wounds; I rushed upon the animal, received a deep wound myself, but dealt him a deadly blow. All the hunters surrounded us; my father sunk down in their arms; a litter was made of the branches of trees, and he was thus carried to the castle. Immediate assistance was called, his wounds were examined, and declared to be mortal.

“What I felt is, on this declaration, not to be described. I shuddered in thinking, that it favoured the interest of my love; and that I felt a passion, which nothing but my father’s death could render legitimate and happy. This situation appeared in all its horror to me; however, the more I examined my heart, the more I felt that I would have given my life to preserve his. I was myself much wounded, but I would not take to my bed; I watched and attended my unhappy father during twelve days; he gave me his benediction, and expired in my arms!—Fatigue, sorrow, the wounds I had received, and which were much festered, threw me into such a condition, that my life was endangered.—

As

As soon as Oswald had heard of my father's accident, he quitted his retreat, and took up his abode at the castle; he found me in a state of insensibility, and on the verge of the grave. In this condition I lay for more than three weeks; at length I returned to life in order to experience new afflictions. On recovering my senses, I reflected, with much pain, that Maria must have been under great uneasiness for two months past. I opened my heart to Oswald, and intreated him to write to the count of Bavaria. He complied with my request; and, in a few days after, I became well enough to write myself to Maria. I began to quit my couch; my health was returning very fast, when one morning I heard a courier from Gerold announced, who presented me a letter.—O generous Oger, your heart has surely felt the force of love and friendship; judge then of my feelings on the perusal of this fatal letter, which was written in the delirium of remorse and despair; and informed me, that Gerold, having at once betrayed his friend and his mistress, had, in an unguarded moment, seduced the innocence of the unfortunate Maria.—He added, that being restored to himself, he was still more enamoured than ever of Beatrice; but having now, as he said, the choice of crimes only, he considered he owed his hand to Maria; that he had written to the duchess in order to break off the marriage; that afterwards he had promised Maria to espouse her publicly in the course of a week, and at the same time he had declared to her, his heart was no longer at his own disposal; that Maria, all bathed in tears, made no reply; but, in a few days after, she had eloped from the palace, leaving him a note which contained these

words: *Maria will not prove any obstacle to the happiness of Gerold; he shall never hear of her more: on leaving Gerold, she consecrates herself without a struggle to that eternal oblivion, which is suitable to her condition.* Gerold finished his letter, by declaring that he had made unavailing inquiry after Maria, and remained totally ignorant of what was become of her. These dreadful particulars agonized my soul, and impressed it with the wildest transports of hatred and resentment. Gerold, notwithstanding all his remorse, appeared to me as the most inhuman of mankind; his greatest crime, in my estimation, was that of still adoring Beatrice, after having seduced Maria: the thoughts of Maria wandering, and disconsolate, inspired such desire of vengeance, that I was eager to set off without delay, to find out Gerold, and strike him to the heart.—But my wounds being scarcely healed, the violent agitation of my mind opened them afresh; a burning fever confined me again to my bed, and the very passions which threw me into this relapse, now led me to be solicitous to recover; I was anxious to preserve my life to gratify my vengeance. A new event, however, changed my resolutions, and effected what all the advice and exhortation of Oswald were unable to perform.

“One day my squire entered my room, and informed me, that an unknown person on horseback had met him in an avenue to the castle, and delivered a letter to him for me, and at the same instant rode precipitately away. I received the letter with emotion; but, great God! what did I feel, when I beheld the hand-writing of Maria!—I have preserved this precious and affecting letter.—Here it is; peruse it.” On saying this, Meinrad presented

presented to the Danish knight that letter which had so often been wet with his tears. Oger read what follows; "Can the guilty Maria venture to write to the virtuous Meinrad?—Yes, it is my duty to write. I know his heart; and while I inform him of my errors and my flight, I wish him to know, that I have found a secure and honourable asylum. After two days and two nights painful journey, I was received under a respectable roof, where indulgent virtue gives admission to the unfortunate, without inquiring whether their misery be a trial from heaven, or the just chastisement of their faults. After having by these particulars gratified your compassionate disposition, it is my duty further to inform you, that I alone am guilty, that my own heart has undone me.—Friendship, together with the most tender gratitude, attached me to you, and for a long while I imagined those sentiments were what you called love. Alas! I only learnt to know in what manner you loved me, by having seen Gerold!—Every thing you suffered for me, I felt for him.—I was a thousand times ready to tell you I adored him; but my aunt always prevented me, by declaring, that such avowal would make you eternally wretched, and involve you in a quarrel with a friend whom you held so dear. I kept silence, but my sorrow and my tears should have undeceived you. Without knowing, alas! what I had to dread, I trembled when you determined I should go alone with Gerold; and I opposed it in vain. During this fatal journey, I was unable to conceal the passion that governed me. Gerold long feigned not to understand me, and I found a thousand ways to prove that I loved him. It was I who, at



length, seduced him.—The day after our arrival at his palace, he held this terrible discourse. *I owe you my hand; it shall be yours; in a week will I lead you to the altar. But do not flatter yourself, Maria, that the guilty Gerold can make you happy. Before he knew you, he adored the duchess of Cleves, and he will love her to his last gasp. I sacrifice my happiness, and consecrate my life to you; but do not ask me for love.* I replied with tears only, and in the dead of the night I eloped from the palace.—Heaven is just; for since I could not partake the tenderness of Meinrad, I ought to have found Gerold insensible!—I have lost my honour, my peace of mind, and your esteem; I love without hope, and I am only fifteen years old!—How long have I to suffer, if, indeed, I survive so much affliction!—O, do not aggravate the horror of my destiny!—I have lost all claims upon you; I know it.—Yet, generous Meinrad, I still venture to offer up to you a prayer.—Maria, who is dishonoured, who is unworthy of your friendship, but who is overwhelmed with misfortune, conjures you on her knees, to give up all desire of vengeance, all sense of resentment against Gerold. Consider that, in spite of my weakness and my errors, I am not ungrateful; the remembrance of your favours will be ever present to my mind, and your most determined contempt can never weaken that pure and vivid attachment with which you inspire me; the only virtue I have left!—O! Meinrad, why was I not born your sister!—I should then have had a friend, and might have poured out my sorrows into his bosom.—Ah, were you my brother, what tender friendship had united us together!—How satisfied would you have ever been with my heart!—

Yes,

Yes, one of my greatest afflictions, is to know that you are wretched; is to be persuaded, from my own feelings, that you will ever continue so; for there is no cure for love. Alas! of that I am but too certain!—Yet you have nothing to reproach yourself with; your conduct has always been as pure as your mind, and I bless heaven that you are less to be pitied than myself!—O, you, who ought to curse the day in which you first took pity on my fate, farewell!—My generous protector, may my repentance and my misfortunes appease your just indignation!—But whatever may be your sentiments, deign to be persuaded, that you will always remain the dearest friend of the unhappy Maria.”

“ This letter,” resumed Meinrad, “ which displayed the angelic soul of Maria, served only to increase my regret, and inflame my resentment against Gerold; but a prayer from Maria, was to me a most sacred command.—Of all the pains that racked my heart, the most insupportable arose from my ignorance of the place of Maria’s retreat, and, of course, my utter inability to answer her letter; or, which would be more properly said, to fly to her! O, how should I have delighted to promise her to overcome, or at least to silence for ever, an unhappy attachment! to adopt her for my sister; to merit and obtain her confidence, to wipe away her tears, and to consecrate my whole life to afford her consolation!

“ As she had mentioned her place of retreat to be within three or four days journey from the residence of Gerold, I caused the most diligent inquiries to be made in the whole of the country around; but they were made in vain; I concluded she was retired to a convent, and I am still of that opinion; but probably a

change of name, and some other precautions, render the discovery of her asylum impossible. My resolution was supported as long as I flattered myself with the hope of finding Maria; but that hope being destroyed, I became totally disheartened, and a prey to the deepest sorrow. Entirely taken up with the thoughts of Maria, I persuaded myself it was her intention to renounce the world, and consecrate herself to God. I then formed the resolution to embrace the same kind of life; this indeed, was no sacrifice; for what had I to regret in all the universe, when Maria was lost to me! 'At least,' said I, 'we shall be re-united in sentiments, in occupations and duty; O, Maria! the austere penance, to which you condemn yourself, will I partake; each of us, pining under insurmountable passion, will mourn in silence and obscurity; each, at the foot of the altar, will invoke the Supreme Being; we will pray and weep together. Alas! you will think less on your unhappy friend than your barbarous seducer—and as for me, I shall think only of you!—But one day shall you know, that in losing you, Meinrad has lost every thing; you shall know, that he was attached but to you alone, and you will say, *he deserved to be beloved!*'

"I communicated my intentions to Oswald, who vainly endeavoured to dissuade me from them. However, he obtained a promise from me, that before I should shut myself up in a monastery, I would pass a year in solitude. He added, that he would accompany me, and if, at the expiration of that time, I should persist in my resolution, he would himself partake in my fate, and for ever fix himself in the convent I should choose. I could not refuse this delay, to a generous  
and

and faithful friend, who thus associated himself in my sad lot. We set out together; this savage and retired spot pleased us; here I built the chapel and the hermitage, and here have we lived five months. Religion, and the converse of the sage Oswald, have insensibly calmed the violence of the passion which consumed me. Maria will be ever dear to me, but her interesting image, which is always before my eyes, no longer fills my heart with agitation and despair, her remembrance softens without disturbing me.—In fine, each day confirms me in the resolution of consecrating myself entirely to God; love alone induced me to form it; but it is religion which confirms it, and which will enable me to attain its full accomplishment.”



## CHAPTER V.

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VICE HUMILIATED.

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*L'hipocrisie est un hommage, que la vice rend à la vertu.*

*Maximes de la ROCHEFOUCAULT.*

WHILE Meinrad was relating his story, Armofede, whose eyes were fixed upon him, seemed to listen with such interest and commiseration, that Meinrad's attention was sometimes drawn from his subject, so much was he affected by her sensibility. When the company sat down to table, he placed by his side the pretty page, who had shown such goodness of heart, and such ingenuousness of disposition. Towards the middle of the repast, Oger, who had already complained of a pain in his head, was seized with a violent shivering; they felt his pulse, and finding him feverish, they led him to the little apartment that was allotted him. He was indisposed to such a degree, that he begged to be left alone with Sylvan, and to go immediately to bed. Meinrad, taking hold of Armofede, went out with her; Oswald repaired to his cell, and Meinrad conducted Armofede to his own chamber, informing her, that the sudden illness of Oger had deranged him a little; as it had been his intention to put him and his two pages in the bed he had prepared for him \*. I have no other spare

\* It is well known, that in former times, and even as late as the last century, it was the fashion to have very large beds, and a common custom for two or three, and frequently four or five persons to sleep together in the same bed.

bed, continued Meinrad, but I will give you the half of mine, which is still larger than that of Oswald's. At this, Armoselede smiled, and refused the offer, assuring him she could sleep exceedingly well in a chair. "No, no," returned Meinrad, "I am absolutely determined you shall sleep with me; and I assure you, without a compliment, that I shall suffer no inconveniency from it." On saying this, Meinrad shut the door of his cell; he then began to undress himself, and he invited Armoselede to do the same. "Indeed, sir," said Armoselede, "I cannot think of undressing—and I assure you, that, if Oger had not been ill, I should not have partaken his bed; I should rather a thousand times have passed the night on the floor."

Armoselede did not say this without design; for she had already formed a plan of seduction. Meinrad was two and twenty; he was handsome, tender, and his unhappy passion and his piety rendered him, in her estimation, a conquest the more desirable. She thought every thing was possible to be effected by her charms and artifices. Besides, she always yielded to the impression of the moment, and in the course of one night to render so passionate a lover faithless, and pervert a saint, appeared to her a sublime attempt, and the true master-piece of coquetry. In the mean while, Meinrad continued pulling off his clothes; and asked the timid and respectful little page how old he was. Armoselede, who under her disguise, could easily pass for a few years younger than she was, replied that she was fifteen. "Alas!" added she, "it was the age of the ungrateful Maria, when she left you." "O, call her not ungrateful," replied Meinrad; "I was blinded by love, but

she was sincere and tender; and I have only to complain of myself!"—"Ah, fir," said Armoflede, interrupting him, "I fhall never conceive, that the object of your affections could abandon you for another; and for a vile betrayer! How was it poffible, that ſhe had not learned of you to be in love with virtue?"—"Ah," cried Meinrad, "with a heart ſo tender, and with ſo much innocence, even virtue itſelf may go aſtray; of this was Maria an example. Believe me, Philenus, that a purer ſoul than Maria's does not exiſt upon earth."

On ſaying this, Meinrad went into bed, and calling to Armoflede, "I poſitively inſit upon it;" ſaid he, "that you come to me. I will not allow you to paſs the night upon a chair. Come, come, give over theſe ceremonies, undreſs yourſelf and come to bed." Armoflede ſtill made reſiſtance, and under apparent confuſion ſtammered out ſome words which Meinrad did not underſtand. Meinrad now loſing all patience, inſiſted, in a commanding tone; the hypocritical Armoflede ſeemed to yield through fear and reſpect; ſhe fell upon her knees, and made a long and fervent prayer; ſhe then undreſſed with many ſighs, and at laſt lay down by the ſide of Meinrad, affecting to keep at as great diſtance as poſſible, lying even on the edge of the bed. Meinrad did not go to ſleep till very late; Armoflede heard him ſoftly ſigh; but at length the peaceful reſpoſe of a pure conſcience ſuſpended all his pains. The image, however, of the unfortunate Maria, always preſent to his memory, purſued him even in his dreams. Twice he uttered in a plaintive voice her beloved name. Armoflede ſmiled, on thinking that the pious  
Meinrad

Meinrad was not so thoroughly cured of love, as he pretended to be.

At day break, Meinrad, feeling a weight upon his stomach, awoke; he discovered that the little page, whose respiration announced the soundest sleep, had thrown his arm round his bedfellow's neck and reposed his head upon his breast. Unwilling to disturb the slumbers of the amiable child, Meinrad would not derange him, but endeavoured to fall again to sleep in that position. Unable, however, to effect his purpose, he opened his eyes, and the first thing he saw was a pretty hand and arm, exactly like those of Maria. Meinrad started as he examined Armoselede; and let the reader judge of his surprise, when the opening of her shirt discovered to him the most beautiful bosom in the world!—Confused and troubled, his first aim perhaps was not to rush from the arms of Armoselede; he lay motionless with astonishment; but at length the virtuous and penitent Meinrad contemplated, with attention, that bewitching object; in recollecting her unwillingness to come into bed, he likewise remembered her devotion, her artlessness, her sensibility, and tender youth; the innocence, too, he ascribed to her, for he imagined that Oger was unacquainted with her sex, all disposed his soul to give way to the most dangerous commiseration. Piety is so confiding, and so credulous!—And how, too, could a saint venture to form a rash judgment? Meinrad, therefore, was naturally induced to imagine this young beauty was as pure and artless as she appeared charming.

In the midst of these reflections, Meinrad perceived upon Armoselede's bosom a slight golden chain,



to which hung a small medallion. He examined it with curiosity, and observed, that the medallion contained a lock of hair, and the following words wrought in letters of gold: *Love and pleasure*.—Armoflede, though profoundly artful, was extremely giddy and frequently off her guard; a defect of no small inconvenience to a person of her character; and in preparing the scene we have just been reading, together with a sublime romance, which she was to relate when she awakened, she had totally forgotten the medallion, the chain of which, indeed, was rivetted round her neck, and was never taken off; it may be however supposed, that she would have broken the chain on going to bed, and removed this indiscreet medallion; but the work was so fine and slight, that it was concealed in the folds of the shirt, and not at all perceived by her when she laid her arm across the bosom of Meinrad. Fortunately Meinrad discovered it. The two words he had read left no doubt in his mind respecting the character and conduct of the person who had chosen such a device. Indignation, and the most deliberate contempt, restored him to himself again; he rushed from the arms of his bed-fellow, threw a cloke over his shoulders, and leaped out of bed. Armoflede, ignorant of the discovery of the medallion, appeared to be just awaking; and at once affected surprise, fear, and shame; she wept, and fell at Meinrad's feet. She was going to exhibit her romance, but Meinrad repulsed her with disdain. "Cease," said he, "to prolong an useless imposture; I know you, and you have lost every charm that could render you dangerous. If your heart be not irreparably corrupted, hasten and extricate yourself from the  
abject

abject condition into which vice has plunged you ; the foolish pride, which leads you astray, ought to assist your endeavours : for your transient successes are but the work of lies and deceit. Consider, that you would be unable to seduce the man of the most depraved disposition, did he contemplate you without illusion, in your own shape ; consider, too, that in persevering in this shameful state of depravity, after having been the opprobrium of your own sex, you will, in a few years, become the abomination and contempt of ours."

## CHAPTER VI.

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*A FATAL MISTAKE.*

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J'ai tout fait, tout osé pour t'aimer pour te plaire,  
 J'ai trahi mon pays, et mon père, et mon roi,  
 Cependant, vois le prix, ingrat, que j'en reçois !

*Ariane de THOMAS CORNEILLE.*

THE pious Meinrad did not convert Armoslede ; but his discourse served to humiliate her to a degree which she had never before experienced ; Meinrad's virtue gave a prophetic air to his words, which disturbed and intimidated the shameless Armoslede ; she lost, for a moment, all her effrontery, and for the first time of her life, a sense of shame compelled her to cast down her eyes, and brought a blush on her cheek. She hastened to leave the chamber in which severe truth had just given her so terrible a lesson ; she found Oger awake and without his fever, and she pressed him to set off immediately. They bade farewell to Meinrad, and departed. Let us leave them to pursue their journey, and return to the Knights of the Swan. Oliver, as we have already seen, was much out of humour on leaving Oger's cottage ; but the gentleness and affectionate behaviour of Isambard had at length dispelled the cloud which hung over his mind ; and, observing the extreme desire which his friend felt to hear the rest of his story, he thus resumed the continuation of it.

“ Isambard,

“ Ifambard, O my brother!—What a proof of friendship am I this day going to give thee, in continuing this heart-rending relation.—I am now come to the fatal period, since which my life has been nothing more than a long and excruciating agony! Thou knowest my punishment, but thou wilt lament me still more when thou knowest the crime which causes it.

“ Thou hast heard under what dreadful auspices I received the hand of Celanira; alas! all the successive events but too much accorded with those sinister presages! That union, of which I had formed to myself so enchanting an idea, proved to me an inexhaustible source of misery. Celanira, though tender and affectionate, could not render me happy; I was above all things anxious for her felicity, and I always found her overwhelmed with remorse, and unable to conceal her feelings from me. A single care from her father was sufficient to increase the bitterness of it to a degree that affected her reason. Naturally of a superstitious turn, every thing contributed to multiply her fears and terrors. Her extreme delicacy, and the disordered state of her imagination, exaggerated her fault and her weakness to such a point, that she considered herself the most guilty person in the universe; and when ever mention was made of virtue, filial piety, the love of our country, and the sacredness of a vow, she would blush, turn pale, and imagine she was hearing her own condemnation. The eulogium of her character gave her still greater pain. I recollect, that Angilbert had written some verses upon Amalberga, in which, in praise of her conduct and virtue, he compared her to Celanira: the latter was unable to hear them read with-

out



out shedding tears. Never did I hear her utter a deliberate complaint, a circumstance which served to increase both our torments; confidence forsook our converse; I concealed from her to what excess she rendered me wretched; she was anxious to hide her own suffering; but being incapable of feigning, she betrayed herself by expressions which fell from her, in spite of all her care, and by her unstudied replies which pierced me to the heart. Never did her unhappy husband clasp her in his arms without finding her fearful and trembling; never did she sleep upon his bosom without being disturbed by frightful dreams.—Often in the darkness of the night I have felt her tears moisten my face.—I once ventured to cry out, ‘O, if thou lovest me, what hast thou at this moment to lament?’ ‘To be no longer worthy of thee,’ replied she; and thus was it that love, far from alleviating her regret, served only to embitter it. In the mean while no one had the least suspicion of our secret union; all the court thought me the husband of Armosede, and the latter took care to confirm every one in their error, by her conversation and deportment. To act a part which so highly gratified her vanity, was in no respect painful to her. To have it universally believed, that she had been preferred to the princess Emma, whom she hated, was, in her estimation, a triumph as soothing as it was flattering; to have prevailed over the daughter of Charlemagne, to have secured the heart of a man whom the emperor honoured with his particular favour, were in her eyes a title of glory preferable to all the felicity which love itself could bestow. She attracted the public attention; the splendid sacrifices, of which she

was

was considered the object, gave her great celebrity; and this was sufficient, if not to satisfy her insatiable pride, yet to console her at least for the real passion which she knew I entertained. Furthermore, the sincere admiration, with which her false generosity inspired me, proved another source of enjoyment to her; in fine, knowing but the half of our secret, being acquainted with our love only, and totally ignorant of our union, she cherished great hopes of the future. In spite of her intelligence and her cunning, it was impossible she could discover the mystery we were solicitous to conceal from her. She perceived us both to be so cast down, and so wretched, that all her observations confirmed her in the persuasion, that we had ourselves given up all hope.

“ In this manner passed several months, when Witikind informed his daughter, that Albion, languishing under his wounds, was coming into France for medical assistance; Witikind added, that Albion had no hopes of recovery, and that he came principally to die near his friend. In a few days after, Albion actually arrived; the physicians, who were consulted, judged his case to be mortal, and beyond the power of art. The day after this opinion was given, I saw Witikind, and being alone with him, he spoke to me of the unfortunate Albion—‘ My dear Oliver,’ added he, ‘ you alone could console me under such a loss; but if I may believe public report, it is no longer in your power to restore a son to Witikind.’ These words he pronounced with an air of doubtfulness, and in a tone of interrogation which demanded a reply; but the confused mixture of a thousand contrary sensations, perturbation,

turbation, gratitude, dismay, and remorse, entirely deprived me of the power of answering him. My eyes were full of tears, and I stammered out a few broken expressions. Witikind took my distress for an avowal of my secret marriage with Armossede;—‘I understand you,’ said he, ‘my misfortune is complete!’ On uttering these words, he looked up to heaven, with a sigh, and left me. Thy generous heart, my dear Isambard, may conceive what this tender friendship of Witikind must have made the seducer of Celanira feel! How base did I appear in my own eyes during this conversation, which nevertheless insured me the happiness of my life! But how can we taste of happiness when we lose our own esteem? How enjoy the greatest benefits when we are conscious of not deserving them? The unfortunate Celanira was but too deeply impressed with these distressing reflections; ‘Alas!’ cried she, in the bitterness of her regret, ‘providence and parental tenderness reserve me a felicity, which ought to have been the reward of virtue!—What shall I feel, when the best of fathers, in presenting me the lover for whom I have betrayed him, shall say, ‘in recompense of thy filial piety, I give thee Oliver for a husband!’—Such language tortured my heart; in vain I repeated to Celanira that I alone was guilty: ‘Ah!’ replied she, ‘could I even give way to such an illusion, should I be the less to be lamented?’

“Armossede, in the mean while, with great uneasiness, saw Albion on the verge of the grave, being conscious, that after his death I should marry Celanira by the consent of her father and the emperor. She anticipated, with much indignation, the triumph of

Emma

Emma on the discovery that her enemy had never been her rival; Armossede could not reconcile herself to the loss of her celebrity and the fruit of her artifices; the death of Albion not only would remove an error which flattered her vanity, but at the same time overturned all her projects of ambition. Besides, being persuaded (notwithstanding the irregularity of her life) that she was very much in love with me, she considered every thing was allowable to such united motives, and prepared herself to dare every thing, and run every risk, for the interest of her reputation, her fortune, and her love. A fatal incident but too well seconded her sinister plots! One day, when Celanira, setting off for her villa, had objected to my passing the night there, though her father was to be absent, Armossede requested a private interview; and I went to her apartments. There, after a long preamble, she held this dreadful discourse: ‘Celanira,’ said she, ‘deceives you; she is faithless, and betrays you for the sake of a new lover. I have incontrovertible proof of her perfidy. This very night she has made an assignation with the man she prefers to you. I am ready to accompany you this evening to her house. I have the key of the garden; I will introduce you, and with your own eyes will you see the truth of the incredible fact which my friendship for you discloses; but I require, upon your word of honour, that whatever you may discover, you will make no disturbance; contempt ought to preserve you from anger; you must, therefore, give me your oath that you will quietly retire with me as soon as you have proof of Celanira’s falseness.’

“ The



“ The execrable Armosfede might have still continued to speak without any interruption. Penetrated as I was with the most violent indignation against her, and petrified with astonishment, I wanted terms to express the horror with which she inspired me; her discourse had not created the slightest suspicion against the angelic creature, whom she dared to defame with so much audacity; my first idea was to reply that her atrocious calumny made so little impression upon me, that I should be satisfied with informing Celanira of it by a note, and not go to her myself.—O, why did I not follow this first movement of my soul!—But driven on by the furies, and dragged along by my fatal destiny, I rejected the design; I would not allow the perfidious Armosfede an occasion of maintaining, hereafter, her horrid calumny; I was determined to confound her; and I consented to be conducted by her to the mansion; for as I could not acknowledge that I had myself a key of Witikind’s garden, it was necessary I should submit to go there with her. I did not conceal from her the thorough contempt with which her infamous declarations had impressed me: she seemed but little surprised, and replied, that she expected to find all the incredulity which I manifested; ‘ my love for you,’ added she, ‘ has led me to brave even your injustice; but I must again repeat, that I do not consent to introduce you to-night into Celanira’s house, but upon express condition, that the moment you make discovery of her conduct, you withdraw, without seeking to take vengeance, without attacking your rival, or committing any kind of violence; and for this purpose I must again require your  
word

word of honour.' 'I give it you,' returned I, 'and I promise you beside, that hereafter you shall be the sole object, not of my anger, for you are not even worthy to excite it, but of the most thorough and rooted contempt.'

"In this manner we parted, and three hours afterward, when night came on, we set off together.—During this fatal journey, I did not utter a single word; she frequently endeavoured to speak to me, but I did not condescend to make any reply. I continued the whole way in the same disposition of mind, and under the same persuasion of the perfect innocence of Celanira. I was only endeavouring to divine by what species of imposture Armoflede intended to deceive me. I thought of several, and among others, that she would show me a woman in the disguise of a man; or, perhaps, I should really see a man, who, having been secretly introduced by her, should go out of Celanira's pavillion in my presence. By these reflections I endeavoured to prepare myself beforehand for the steps I ought to take, in order to unmask the perfidy of Armoflede, without exciting any dangerous clamour. When we drew near to the house, I was suddenly seized with undefcribable terrour; I was alarmed, I shuddered, and I recollected with great oppression of heart, that Celanira had made an objection to receive me this very night!—In the mean while, after having proceeded along the garden wall, Armoflede stopped at the fatal gate, and turning towards me—'At length,' said she, 'you are going to see whether I be the person who deceives you; in a few minutes I shall be but too well revenged for your cruel disdain; but  
then

then, I shall have to lament you, and you will do justice to Armofede's heart.'

“ The confident tone in which she uttered these words, chilled my soul; the cold contempt which, till this moment, I had felt for her, changed suddenly into fury.—Armofede became now a thousand times more odious in my sight, than when I had observed nothing farther in her discourse than her absurd calumnies.— ‘ O, most presumptuous of all creatures,’ cried I, ‘ do you think, that, if Celanira were guilty, you can console me! No, do not give yourself up to that dream of senseless pride, you would then prove but the object of my horror; henceforward you can inspire me with contempt or hatred only.’ She made no reply, but hastily opened the gate; the noise made me start.—Before I entered, I recollected myself a moment, I endeavoured to recal my wandering reason; vain efforts!—Already had hell entered into my heart! Armofede went forward; I followed her!—The night—that terrible night! was serene.—I passed behind a seat surrounded by flowers, upon which I had so often reposed with Celanira, and at this same hour! The odour of the jessamine and the rose recalled to my remembrance those dear interviews, and the presence of Celanira; I pictured her celestial form to my mind in so perfect a manner, that for a moment I felt my fatal apprehensions give way, and my gloomy presentiments subside; I was enchanted with the sweet perfume of the flowers, I thought I was inhaling the fragrant breath of Celanira!—Alas! this was the last pleasing sensation that I have experienced!—Led by the detestable Armofede, I drew near to the pavillion,

I shuddered on discovering that the lower apartment was lighted up; it was midnight!—I advanced—I concealed myself behind the shrubs at forty paces from the room, the two glazed doors of which were wide open.—‘Now,’ said Armofede, ‘remember your promises and look there.’ At these words, I pushed aside, with trembling hands, the branches which hid the pavillion from my sight.—O, my friend, conceive, if it be possible, the despair with which I was seized, upon seeing, distinctly, a young man of tall stature sitting by the side of Celanira, who was weeping, and holding both his hands in her’s!—‘O, perfidious creature,’ cried I—On saying this, I endeavoured to rush towards the pavillion; Armofede held me.—The terrified Celanira, who had recognised my voice, let out the young man through an adjacent closet—and she, instead of making her escape, came into the garden. In the mean while I broke loose from Armofede; I had grasped my sword in my hand; impelled by fury, I could neither see nor hear, a frightful cloud covered my eyes; I ran to the pavillion.—Celanira came to meet me; I rushed towards her—and this ruffian arm plunged the sword in her bosom.—She gave a lamentable shriek!—I saw her extended at my feet.—I placed the weapon, stained with her blood, against the ground; I imagined I had laid the point of it to my heart, and, intending to give myself a mortal stab, I fell down senseless by the side of the unhappy victim of my fury.”

On finishing these words, the wretched Oliver, all pale and trembling, his eyes fixed, and his brow covered with a cold sweat, hid his face on the bosom  
of



of his friend.—Ifambard pressed him in his arms, and melted into tears.—Oliver was incapable of continuing the tragical narrative ; but he resumed it the next day, as will appear in the following chapter.

## CHAPTER VII.

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THE OFFERINGS.

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O vous, à ma douleur objet terrible et tendre !

*Mort de Pompée* DE PIERRE CORNEILLE.

O memory ! thou foul of joy and pain !

Thou actor of our passions o'er again !

Why dost thou aggravate the wretch's woe ?

Why add continuous smart to ev'ry blow ?

SAVAGE.

“ I WAS carried, as you know, to my own apartments, and on the third day, I recovered my senses. I then tore off the bandage from the wound, but perceiving that violent measures were going to be taken in order to prevent me from destroying my life, and that my hands were to be tied, I feigned calmness ; I attributed my fury to the delirium the fever had caused ; and thus removed the apprehensions of my attendants, resolving, nevertheless, to avail myself of the first opportunity to put an end to a hated existence, stained with the most horrid of crimes. I did not, however, know the full extent of my guilt, I still thought Celanira faithless. On the evening of this same day, an unknown person requested to speak to me privately, observing that he had something of importance to deliver into my hands. Zemni, who had sitten up three successive nights, had just retired to rest ; my servants refused to admit the stranger into my cham-

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ber; he insisted in so pressing a manner, that they came to consult me upon his errand. At that moment I was struck with an idea, that this person might be sent with some message from the unhappy Celanira, for I had been told she was still alive.—I gave order for the stranger to be introduced, and that we should be left alone together. They obeyed, he came in. He was in deep mourning, and held in his hand a casket and a letter. He advanced slowly, and stopped at the foot of my bed. Casting my eyes upon him, a confused idea enabled me to recollect his person; and suddenly recognising him, ‘Infamous seducer,’ cried I;—and endeavoured to fall upon him; but from excess of weakness I sunk down again upon the bed. He had hitherto kept silence, surveying me with gloomy and forbidding looks; he then answered me in Saxon; ‘Barbarian, I am revenged as well as she; for in this letter, which I bring you, she commands you to live!—Now, know the whole extent of your crime; I am her brother; and she has just expired!’—At these terrible words, I felt my blood freeze in my veins.—My eyes were clouded with a dark veil, I thought myself environed with the shades of death; and to this hope I entirely gave myself up. Having no longer the power of speech, I enjoyed my fainting condition, and hailed the approach of the total cessation of my faculties. Occupied by the consoling idea that I was going to be delivered from an abhorred existence, I welcomed the idea of death; and at the instant which preceded that, in which I wholly lost all sensation, this torn heart still felt a palpitation of joy; I conceived myself at my last gasp!—In this manner

was

was it that I fell into a deep lethargy, which lasted many days. The inhuman care of my attendants, restored me to life. Zemni had been ignorant of my marriage, and could not have known my crime; but he was well acquainted with my sentiments. Having found upon my bed a letter from the most virtuous and unfortunate of women, he had recollected the handwriting. On recovering my senses, I found myself alone with him; he was kneeling at my bed side, his cheeks were deluged in tears, and he was holding the letter in his hand. ‘You cannot,’ said he, ‘give up all thoughts of life before you have heard her last desire; you have not yet opened this letter, you ought to read it.’ On saying this, he gave me the letter. From the moment I perused it, I have ever carried it near my heart; for you alone could I remove it for an instant only; here it is.” Upon this Oliver drew from his bosom the letter of the dying Celanira; Isambard read it, and wet it with his tears; it was expressed in the following terms:

CELANIRA’S LAST LETTER.

‘I lived only for you, and to you will I consecrate my last moments!—Alas!—Could I have foreseen that, on the verge of the grave, I should be under the necessity of justifying myself in your eyes!—That it should be necessary to prove to you that Celanira never loved any but yourself!—O, how has my weakness been punished!—Oliver has been induced to think me vile, perjured, and faithless!—He had seen me sacrifice my duty and my virtue to love, and he has believed, that the guilty daughter of Witikind could prove a guilty wife!—How much, alas! does that painful thought



aggravate the bitterness of my repentance!—But it is just that love, the source of my failings, should at length prove that of my remorse.—No, cruel man, I have not given thee the horrid privilege of despising me. Hast thou then forgotten, that, even in thy arms, I regretted my virtue? I regretted it, and I considered that I had preserved thy esteem! Hast thou then forgotten that inconceivable affection, which attached me to thee? Is there a name in the whole compass of language, which can duly express it? The most passionate love formed but a portion of it; undefinable sympathy, admiration carried to enthusiasm; such were the bands that captivated me! And, in order that I should think only of thee, should see only thee in the whole universe; what farther was necessary, than that my love should be consecrated by a solemn oath?—I loved thee as life is loved, it was in me a sentiment so natural and so rooted, that nothing could remove it from my heart; that it must survive all others, and predominate even in the arms of death!—Have not we often thought, that, had heaven allotted us the same sex, the ardent friendship which would have cemented us would have screened us from the dominion of any other strong passion.—I was forced to love thee, and to love nothing passionately but thee!—And yet, thou hast believed, thou hast said to thyself: *Celanira betrays me!*—Wilt thou reply, that appearances have been sufficient to mislead thee?—How!—Thou hast judged thy friend, thy mistress, thy wife, by appearances!—O, shouldst thou not have considered them deceitful, since they degraded me? Was it then more difficult to examine into, or guess at truth, than to believe me to be a monster? If reason abandoned thee in that dreadful moment,

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moment, was not love alone sufficient to enlighten thee?—Thou knowest, that in thy opinion solely I placed all my pride and all my glory.—And if in that delirium of blind fury the one or the other of us had instantly perished by the murderous blade!—Terrible thought, a thousand times more cruel than death!—O, crime of love, then truly irreparable!—Thou hadst died despising me, or I should have carried my justification with me into the grave! But the moments are too dear to me to waste in superfluous lamentation!—That unknown person, that unhappy object of a fatal mistake is Diaulas (9), is my brother! You know that Witikind had a son, of whom he was extremely fond, and whom he thought he had lost in one of the last battles with the French.—My brother, indeed, lay wounded on the field of battle, and was afterwards despoiled and left for dead. A French knight, the generous Angilbert, discovering signs of life in him, had him taken care of, and my brother recovered; but he concealed his birth and his name from his deliverer. Having obtained his freedom, he repaired into Saxony; before he arrived at his paternal abode, he learnt we were deploring his death, and that Witikind was in treaty with Charlemagne. My brother was an enthusiastic lover of liberty, averse to bend to the emperor's yoke, and determined to join the malecontents; the unfortunate youth took the resolution of renouncing his family, and of suffering my father to remain in his error, in order to avoid paternal malediction, which is held so formidable and terrible among us.—I was the sole confidant of this fatal intention, which I opposed in vain. I engaged myself under the most

holy vows faithfully to keep his secret; and you know I kept that promise.—My brother changed his name, and took every necessary precaution that my father should never hear him spoken of. Since I left Saxony, I remained ignorant of his situation.—One evening an unknown Saxon asked to speak with me, and delivered me a note in the hand-writing of my brother; the note contained these words: *I have some important things to say to you, if you will give me an opportunity of seeing you, submit yourself to the guidance of the person who brings you this.*—I went out at the very instant.—I was conducted a little way out of the town, to a house belonging to Angilbert, who had lent it to my brother, whom he still knew only under his borrowed name. I was introduced into a closet, where I found my brother; as soon as we were alone, I threw myself into his arms. At this moment I heard a great noise, and found, that the servants would not allow a woman to enter the room we were in. On a sudden the door flew open, and I saw Armohede enter.—She was as much surprised as myself, chance only had brought her there, or rather her uneasiness respecting the conduct of Angilbert; for this incident made me acquainted with their mutual passion.—Sanctified, without doubt, by a secret union—while motionless with astonishment she kept looking at me in silence. I spoke Saxon with my brother (to which language she was a stranger). I told him the lady was my most particular friend, that I could answer for her discretion, and that it was impossible to conceal the truth from her, without dishonouring me in her estimation.—My brother made strong objections to this disclosure; I insisted positively;

positively; he yielded, but upon express condition, that I gave him my most sacred promise not to reveal the secret to any other person whatever in the world.—I gave my promise. I then informed Armossede of every thing.

After these explanations it was necessary to part, the lateness of the hour compelled us.—My brother requested a last interview; and he was to depart the day after the morrow. Armossede advised me to receive him in the night time at my own house; I consented to it.—In that fatal interview he informed me, that being returned to the spot where we were both born, he found the virtuous Topal at the point of death.—This respectable old man had delivered a sealed casket into his care, which he said contained something very precious to me, and made him promise to convey it himself into my hands; for my brother had not concealed from him his intention of seeing me once more, and consulting me upon his situation.—This casket contained the golden chain, and the lock of hair with which I had decorated the tree consecrated *to the deliverer of my father!*—To him I loved before I had even heard his name uttered.—Receive these offerings of gratitude and love; they belong to thee. I know thy physicians pronounce thee out of danger—but I am acquainted with thy heart! I know but too well that henceforward life will be an insupportable burden to thee—and yet I conjure thee, I command thee to live. If I had not embraced with sincerity the religion of thy country, if I did not believe in the God of Oliver, I should say to thee, *haste thee to follow me.* But can I brave



the dread of an unhappy eternity, when I consider it with regard to thee? Thou hast a friend left, thou wilt not be alone in the universe.—I have provided for every thing! To this I join a faithful copy of the public declaration I made on recovering the use of my senses. I thought I had but a few moments to live.—I had been carried into the house; I dictated it in the presence of all my servants assembled together; it was written when my father arrived.—It is thy sacred duty never to contradict it, thou canst not, without my consent, dispose of my secret. I permit thee to entrust it to friendship; but I would have it for ever unknown to my father and the public. I feel myself grow weaker.—O, how do I thank heaven for having allowed me to finish this letter, begun three days ago, and so frequently interrupted.—Adieu, my Oliver—In a few instants every thing will be over for me!—I deplore thy existence, and lament my death, which will cost thee so many tears!—Adieu, dear husband!—Live for the sake of virtue, and to expiate our faults: that will be still living for me.'

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE CHASTISEMENT.

Thy wife,  
That never slept a quiet hour with thee,  
Now fills thy sleep with perturbations!

*King Richard III. SHAKESPEARE.*

Oui malgré le forfait qu'avec toi je déplore,  
Je dois me haïr moins, quand tu m'aimes encore,  
Quand tu daignes mêler avec tant de pitié,  
Aux larmes du remords, les pleurs de l'amitié.

*Barnevelt de Mr. DE LA HARPE.*

AFTER the perusal of this letter, the two friends were unable, for more than an hour, to express, but by their tears, what each of them felt; but at length Oliver breaking silence, "canst thou conceive," said he, "that I could read this letter and yet live?—Heaven thought fit to prolong my days, in order to display in my fate, the terrible example of the most deplorable of destinies.—During the course of that horrible day, frequent faintings often gave me hopes of a speedy termination of my agonies; death, that I invoked, ever deluding my expectation, only appeared to approach, in order to render me the more alive to the horrors of existence!—Upon the recovery of my senses, when I beheld the light again, I experienced a movement of despair and madness, which terrified all who surrounded me. Yet respecting the sacred order

I had received, I had not, even for a moment, any intention of delivering myself from life.—I considered the approach of night with a terror I could not account for; at the same time I felt the want and the inclination of being absolutely alone; I was desirous of lamenting without constraint, and giving myself up without interruption to the agony of despair. I consented to swallow an elixir, which relieved and revived me in a miraculous manner; I then declared my intention of passing the whole night alone; Zemni, alarmed at my resolution, absolutely refused to obey; but I removed his apprehensions by making all the vows he required; and, above all, by telling him of the last desire of the unfortunate Celanira.

“ I shall not enter into the detail of what I felt on finding myself entirely alone; it is possible to give some account of the impressions of an ordinary sorrow; but the most dreadful delirium leaves nothing but vague and confused recollections behind it: yet, can you believe it? this horrible night was not that in which I underwent the most exquisite of my sufferings. I lay dangerously ill, it seemed absolutely impossible to bear such a load of evils; and the idea, that death would shortly come to my relief, considerably alleviated their pressure.—The weakness of my head, besides, did not allow me to give myself up without intermission to my despair; I frequently fell into a kind of insensibility, which, without suspending my grief, at least deprived me of the power of dwelling upon it, and destroyed all reflection. In one of these moments of stupor, I heard the door open.—The curtains of my bed were drawn.—A single lamp, just upon the point

point of extinguishing, spread over the room a wavering and doubtful light.—In the mean time I heard the noise of footsteps.—Something moved slowly towards me—stopped at the foot of the bed—and suddenly a voice, which I could not possibly mistake, distinctly pronounced my name—O let me rest on the terrible, the exquisite impression!—On this instant of grief and extasy, in which my ear was smitten with that enchanting sound, which could be no longer heard without a miracle!—At that moment I experienced all the passionate, heart-rending, delicious movements, and all the sublime ideas, which the human mind is able to feel or conceive!—That loved voice inspired all, unveiled all.—It held out eternity to my view.—It redoubled the horror of my remorse.—Interpreter of the Supreme will, it kindled in my soul the most exalted sentiments of religion; it impressed it with fear, with joy, with hope; and blended the adoration due to heaven, with wasting regret and the transports of love.—I was eager to prostrate myself, but an invincible and supernatural force fixed me in my place, and deprived me of all power of motion.—At this moment a dear and dreadful voice uttered these terrible words: *‘I am doomed by eternal justice, to follow and beset thee wherever thou goest.—Henceforward thy submission and thy virtue can alone abridge thy punishment and mine.—Adore, and be resigned.’* At these words the curtains opened, and I beheld, through a luminous bluish cloud, a frightful and bleeding spectre, which, rushing violently upon the bed, lay down by my side.—I had neither the idea nor the desire of fleeing, being wholly engrossed by the consideration of myself being the cause of her sufferings. That was my real punishment; the horror of the vision could



add nothing to its poignancy ; and though it has ever since tormented me, and armed itself every night with new terrors, I solemnly declare, that were it possible, I would not rid myself of a punishment which she partakes.—If I flee from those places, which revive afflicting recollections, if I seek to dissipate my sorrow, it is with no other view than to preserve my reason, which I have frequently felt on the verge of distraction ; for were I to lose the sensation of my misery, she alone would suffer ! she would suffer, and I should live without remorse !—I cannot support that idea ; no, I ought, and I am determined, to be wretched to the last moment of my existence.—Alas, regret and sorrow are the sole ties which now unite us.

“ You imagine, perhaps, that I have finished the story of my sufferings ; a cruel scene yet remains to be told, and its remembrance will never be effaced from my mind.—In the course of a month my wound closed, and the fever left me.—Having proposed to undertake a journey, I was preparing to set off as soon as I was able to quit my bed.—On the morning of my departure, ere I had scarcely put on my clothes, I saw Witikind suddenly enter my chamber !—I uttered a piercing cry, and, covering my face with my hands, fell into a chair ; he rushed towards me, and pressing me in his arms ; ‘ O my son,’ said he, ‘ Albion is just expired ; I was prepared for his loss ; for I knew his wounds were mortal ; but I have no more children.—I am told thou art determined to travel ; what, is the generous defender of my unfortunate daughter resolved to leave us ?’—At these words I shuddered ; I arose with an air of wildness.—I was seized with horror on finding myself

myself in his embrace. Represent to thyself this unhappy father pressing to his heart the murderer of his daughter, and lavishing upon him the acknowledgments of the tenderest gratitude; and judge what must then pass in my heart.—But the reflections I fell into after this interview filled up the measure of my sufferings.—Albion was no more!—And I knew that, from the moment in which his life was despaired of, Witikind had destined Celanira for me!—Thus, had I listened to reason, I should not have given way to a blameable passion; if, after having seen Celanira, I had instantly quitted the spot she inhabited, she would have loved me, but without violating her duty.—The death of Albion would have disengaged her; her father would have recalled me; and I should have returned, worthy of her, and of the happiness that was reserved for me! Ah, what would my present felicity be, had I known how to have governed myself!—Alas! 'tis only in the dreadful condition into which my passions have plunged me, that I have at last learned to know that virtue, not less useful than lovely, is our best guide; that the sacrifices she requires are as necessary to our repose as subservient to our glory; that without her, there is no happiness; and that with her, there can be no reverse of fortune, that is wholly deprived of hope and consolation.”

## CHAPTER IX.

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*THE VEIL.*

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Il s'en présentera, gardez-vous d'en douter.

*Tancrède de VOLTAIRE.*

THE tragical story of the unhappy Oliver being ended, the two friends hastily pursued their journey; within two days ride of the duchy of Cleves, they arrived at the estate of a knight, named Rotbold (10), where they were astonished to find every preparation for a tournament. They perceived a great multitude assembled upon a spacious lawn; in the crowd they distinguished many knights of their acquaintance, and Isambard uttered a sudden exclamation of joy on recognizing Giaffar, the knight whose life they had saved, by plunging into the lake to his succour. Giaffar ran up to the knights, and after having embraced them; 'You arrive,' said he, 'in good time to be witness to a very interesting spectacle; Rotbold, the lord of this place, is going to celebrate his nuptials; he marries a stranger, who is said to be exquisitely beautiful, and many extraordinary circumstances attend this festival; it is reported the fair stranger consented to give her hand to Rotbold, on condition of his inviting all the neighbouring nobility to a tournament, that the wedding might be celebrated with equal splendour and publicity; and this has given rise to many obser-

observations and reflections.—But,' continued Giaffar, 'I hear the cymbals and trumpets; and the signal announces that Rotbold and his mistress are leaving the castle; they are to pass over this lawn in their way to the parish church; we will follow their train and endeavour to get into the church, which is very large, and there we shall see the bride, who, agreeably to the custom of the country, is covered with a veil, which is not taken off before she appears at the altar.'

While Giaffar was yet speaking, the lord of the castle made his appearance, attended with a numerous retinue. The knights advanced in order to be near him as he passed by; Rotbold was magnificently dressed, and led by the hand his intended bride, whose features were not to be distinguished; for she was covered with a large white veil, ornamented with golden fringe; but every one admired the gracefulness of her shape and gait. Four women, following behind, carried elegant baskets, containing the rich presents which were designed for the bride, and which, according to the custom of the times, were to receive a blessing in the church; next came the squires and pages of Rotbold, and the procession was closed by the servants, and a band of music. Oliver, who was little curious, had no desire to join the pageant; but he was prevailed on to enter the church, and was seated near the altar, where the ceremony was to be performed. Oliver, in order to give his friend the better place, retired behind a pillar, which hid the bride and bridegroom from his sight, and falling into deep meditation, he was incapable of paying any attention to what passed. In the mean while, all  
the



the knights, who were bidden to the festival, thronged the church; and every eye was fixed upon the fair stranger, whom Rotbold led to the altar; there he invited her to take off her veil; she then turned to the spectators, and unloosing the veil, they beheld a young lady of dazzling beauty. A murmur of admiration was heard throughout the church, and, at the same instant, the fair stranger advancing forward a few steps—"Knights," said she, "I have been only anxious to assemble you together, in order to find a defender among you."—At these words, Rotbold, in great fury, endeavoured to rush towards the lady, but Isambard and Giaffar threw themselves upon him, and held him; and all the spectators cried out, that the unknown fair one should go on with her explanation. "Well," resumed she, "know then, that the barbarian who has brought me here, is apprised that I am already married, and has confined my unhappy husband in a dungeon."

At these words all the knights surrounded the lady, and vowed to deliver and avenge her. The clamour had aroused Oliver from his reverie; he advanced with the others towards the fair stranger; but no sooner had he cast his eyes upon her face, than he exclaimed—"Great God! what do I behold? Ordalia!"—It was indeed she, and she expressed the greatest joy on recollecting the generous Oliver.—"The glory of defending you," said he, "belongs to me, and I may venture to claim it!" "Yes, sir," replied Ordalia, "I accept you for my knight; and  
these

these brave warriors will approve my choice, when I inform them, that, upon another occasion, you have already saved my honour and my life." "I enter the lists," interrupted Oliver, "Rotbold, I accuse and challenge you; follow me." On saying this, Oliver threw his gauntlet at Rotbold's feet, and immediately went out of the church. Rotbold, whom rage and astonishment had struck dumb, took up the gauntlet in a violent passion, and hastened after his adversary. Every one followed him to the lists. According to custom Oliver received, previous to the combat, from the hands of the lady he was going to defend, his helmet, his sword, and his lance. The beauteous Ordealia, tearing her veil, decked the coat of arms of her knight with the golden fringe; and she gave him the following for the word of battle: VIRTUE AND VENGEANCE (II). "Go, sir," said she, "avenge oppressed innocence; such is the noblest employment of force and valour; you will easily triumph over an enemy so little worthy of you, and who will now, for the second time, be vanquished by you; for you must know, that Rotbold is the person you put to flight when you came to the succour of Albion, as he was attacked by three men."—"Is it possible," exclaimed Oliver, "that Rotbold, whom I have seen combating with valour on the field of glory, under the command of Charlemagne, should have been capable of such baseness?"—"Come," cried Rotbold, "and thou shalt see that this arm, which proved so fatal to the Saxons, shall not prove less formidable to thee." Oliver made no reply, but rushed upon the arena, and the combat began.

It

It was long and terrible; Ifambard, more than once, trembled for his friend; and all the spectators partook in the concern he showed for his brother in arms. Oliver, weakened by the languor of habitual grief, had neither the strength nor the vigour of Rotbold; but he preserved such presence of mind, and displayed so much skill and address, that he was continually able to evade his adversary's blows; for more than an hour he stood merely upon his defence, leaving his enemy to waste his strength in fruitless attacks, which were the more fatiguing, as they were made with all the impetuosity of anger and fury; at last, when he perceived Rotbold to be worn out with labour, and obliged to slacken his blows, he, in his turn, began to assail with a vigour which quickly decided the victory. Rotbold, all breathless and dismayed, staggered, and gave way; Oliver rushed upon him, and, in the same instant, wounded him, threw him on the ground, and took his sword from him. A general cry of joy, and the universal applause of the spectators immediately proclaimed the triumph of Oliver. The latter keeping his enemy still extended in the dust: "Unworthy knight," said he, "thou who dishonourest valour, because thou provest that it can be allied with baseness and cruelty, I condemn thee never to bear arms any more: I farther require, that thou consentest to make me absolute master of thy castle during two whole days; on such conditions, I grant thee thy life." At these words, Rotbold, confounded and trembling with rage, made the vows which his conqueror required at his hands: Oliver then left him upon the field of battle. Ifambard, Giaffar, and the  
other

other knights, surrounded and congratulated the conqueror, and carried him in triumph to the tent, to which the fair Ordalia had retired during the combat.

Ordalia, at first, could only express her joy and gratitude by her tears; then affectionately pressing the hands of Oliver in her own—"Ah, sir," said she, "those victorious hands, which have just delivered me from an odious persecutor, must restore me a beloved husband; being master of Rotbold's castle, you can lay open its dungeons; I know that which shuts up my husband; deign to follow me: can I better reward your courtesy than by affording you the means of again performing a virtuous action?" It may easily be supposed, that Oliver had secured the keys of the castle of Rotbold, in order to deliver the victims of that tyrant. Accompanied by Isambard and Giaffar, he immediately conducted Ordalia to the castle. After having passed through a long suite of apartments, Ordalia caused an iron-door to be opened, which discovered an arched vestibule, at the extremity of which was found a stair-case; there, although it was still daylight, they provided themselves with torches; and, after having gone down more than two hundred steps, they came to a spacious vault. Ordalia, with a key in her hand, ran towards an iron grate, opened it, and rushed into a dungeon; the three knights followed her; and, in a moment, perceived her in the arms of a captive loaded with irons—"O, my generous deliverer," cried Ordalia, "it is you who must break these chains!"—Oliver, holding a torch, approached the captive—He looked at him, and trembled.—A terrible



rible and indelible remembrance, in an instant, recalled his features. Ifambard saw his friend grow pale; he advanced towards him, and the wretched Oliver fainted in his arms. This accident was attributed to the fatigue of the combat, and the want of air; Oliver was carried out; but Ifambard, who had a glimpse of the truth, remained a moment for the sake of fuller information; and he soon learned, that the husband of Ordalia was Diaulas, the son of Witi-kind, and brother to the unfortunate Celanira. Diaulas, having only seen Oliver in his bed, and in a dying condition, had not been able to recollect him. Ordalia, who had known Oliver in Saxony, under a borrowed name only, had not yet had time to learn his real name, for she had not asked it, believing that she already knew it; so that both herself and husband were totally ignorant, that Oliver was their deliverer. Ifambard, who, in the first moments of confusion, had seen only Diaulas, remarked with surprise, a child of nine or ten years old, of a charming countenance, who partook in his captivity, but who was not fettered; he appeared transported with delight at the happiness of Diaulas and Ordalia, and weeping, lavished on them the most tender caresses. The age of the young couple would not allow the child to be taken for their son; Ifambard hazarded a question on that head: "Sir," replied Ordalia, "this amiable and interesting creature is our adopted child, and when you are acquainted with my history, you will learn how much we ought to cherish him."

Ifambard, after this explanation, conducted Diaulas,

las,

las, Ordalia, and the boy, into an apartment of the castle, promising them, on the next day, they should see the brave and generous knight who had restored them to liberty and happiness. Giaffar spent the whole evening in the hall, where a magnificent repast had been prepared for all the knights, and Isambard retired to his unhappy friend. The sight of Diaulas had revived in the mind of that wretched man all the horrors of the early period of his misfortune and his crime. Isambard was startled at the wildness of his discourse, and the violence of his despair; but when the first transports began to subside, Isambard made it appear to his friend, that the events of that day ought to diminish the burdensome pressure of his remorse; and that he could not be insensible to the happiness of having restored a son to Witikind, and rendered back a wife to Diaulas. "Ah," replied Oliver, "nothing can assuage the remorse of Celanira's assassin; nothing can expiate such a crime!—Yet allowing that Witikind has never ceased to regret the loss of his son, that if he recovered him, he could still be happy; it might indeed alleviate my sorrow to restore him back, but would Diaulas consent to what I ask in that respect?" "Ordalia," replied Isambard, has promised me to relate her story to-morrow; I will hear it, and repeat it to you; that recital will inform us of the true sentiments of Diaulas, and I flatter myself they will prove agreeable to my hopes." The next morning Isambard repaired to the apartment of the young couple, and informed them, that his friend, being still indisposed, could not leave  
his

his bed before evening ; in the mean time Ifambard intrusted them to relate the events which had put them in the power of the ferocious Rotbold : the youthful pair, after having expressed the keenest regret, that their benefactor was not himself able to hear the narration, consented to gratify Ifambard's curiosity ; and the beautiful Ordalia, breaking silence, related the story, which will be found in the following chapter.—

## CHAPTER X.

THE STORY OF ORDALIA.

L'histoire d'une femme est toujours un roman.

LA CHAUSSÉE.

——— World, world, O world!

But that thy strange mutations make us hate thee——

*King Lear.* SHAKESPEARE.

“ THE days of my infancy, and those of my earliest youth, were the happiest of my whole life. My family, which was closely united with that of Witikind, destined Diaulas for my husband; and our relations entered into a solemn engagement, which accorded with the dearest wishes of our hearts. Diaulas, an ardent defender of his country and of freedom, followed his father to the war, and associated himself in all his dangers and his glory. In the last battle which Witikind fought with the French, Diaulas, being dangerously wounded, was left on the field; he was thought to be dead, and my sorrow brought me to the verge of the grave. In the mean while Witikind, seduced by Charlemagne, listened to his proposals, and soon treated publicly with him; this treaty, indeed, was ratified by the major part of the nation; but Iliska, my father, refused to subscribe to it: he made his escape, went secretly over Saxony, roused every where an abhorrence to slavery, and made himself a party, which at first was not numerous, but which, in a short time,



time, became formidable. While my father was thus assembling together the friends of liberty, I remained in a languishing condition in the place where he had left me, and where Diaulas soon after came to restore me to life. Determined henceforward to live for his country only and for me, he suffered Witikind to remain in ignorance that he was still alive; and, under a borrowed name, he joined the party of my father. Our marriage was long deferred by the war, which raged with more violence than ever, and by the internal disturbances which took place in the country." Here Diaulas interrupted Ordalia:—"Allow me," said he, "to describe in a few words the situation which I was in; the whole truth must be related to the friend, the brother in arms of our deliverer; and notwithstanding the respect which you cherish for the memory of your unhappy father, I cannot dissemble that he it was who ruined us all. It was not without great concern," continued Diaulas, "that I determined to renounce a family which was so dear to me; but Ordalia, and the interest of my country, extorted from me this painful sacrifice. I had, besides, the most exalted idea of the patriotism and principles of Iliska; he was, indeed, distinguished neither by military talents nor eloquence; and he owed the ascendancy he had acquired over the minds of the people, solely to the reputation of his integrity and virtue (12). But when he found his popularity well established, he gave himself up without constraint to all the violence of his disposition. He persecuted with great animosity all the partizans of my father, and all his own personal

sonal enemies. In vain I endeavoured to check these excesses; nothing could arrest their course; nor could any one avoid destruction, but in the participation of his opinions and his violences; it was necessary to become either his accomplice or his victim. I came to the determination of withdrawing, and of concealing myself for a second time; I wandered over Saxony under a new borrowed name; and I saw the agents of Iliska conduct themselves in every place with like cruelty. These resentful and sanguinary chiefs, while they oppressed the people, lavished upon them the basest adulation, and affected popular manners to the most ridiculous degree; they acted as tyrants; and, while they exalted the charms of freedom in their discourses, they were committing the vilest acts of despotism (13). Then was it that I began to despair of the salvation of the country. An internal revolution could alone preserve it from destruction. It was necessary that some happy system of justice, humanity, and clemency should instantly take place in reparation of so many horrors; but there was no authority which counterpoised that of Iliska: Saxony had entirely submitted to the yoke of Charlemagne; and thus was the most noble and the most just of causes dishonoured and undone.

“In the mean while the troops of Charlemagne having made a new invasion of Saxony, I entered into our army as a volunteer. I was under no apprehension of meeting my father in battle; I knew he had refused the command of the French army; and, had I been ignorant of that circumstance, I was sufficiently acquainted with the great soul of Witikind, to be cer-

tain that nothing could have determined him to take up arms against his country. I was engaged in the memorable battle of the Brook, which decided the fate of Saxony (14). Obligated to flee with the wretched remains of our vanquished army, I quickly learned, that another body of french troops had penetrated into the canton which was in the hands of Iliska; that the latter, fearful of being delivered up to the french generals, had retired, together with his daughter, to the fortress of Eresbourg. I forgot all the crimes of Iliska in the concern I felt at the danger of Ordalia; and, determined to defend her, or perish with her, I immediately took the route to Eresbourg. I found the place environed by French troops, under the command of Rotbold; however, with some difficulty, I entered it.

“ Iliska, full of distrust and suspicion, the invariable torment of tyrants, had but little dependance on the garrison of Eresbourg, and foresaw the fatal destiny which was in reserve for him. He received me with embarrassment: however, my love for his daughter being in his estimation responsible for my fidelity, he divided with me the command of the fortress: our troops sustained several attacks with great resolution; but danger and misfortune were unable to soften the vindictive temper of Iliska, he still committed new violences, which at length excited a dreadful sedition. Iliska, being attacked in his own house by an enraged multitude, made his escape with Ordalia, and took refuge in the temple of Irminful. Seconded with thirty soldiers only, I favoured the flight of Iliska, and combated the insurgents; but soon, overwhelmed by numbers,

numbers, I saw almost all my unfortunate companions fall by my side, and, being myself wounded, I was on the point of sinking, when suddenly a confused and terrible clamour, mingled with the cries of victory, informed us, that the triumphant enemy had entered the place. Fear quickly dispersed the troop which was overpowering me; and I then dragged myself along towards the temple of Irminsul, wishing, at least, to die near Ordalia: I found the temple shut; but, notwithstanding the weakness arising from my wound, and the loss of blood, I at length made myself heard, and the gates were opened to me. After going through a spacious vestibule, I entered the temple, and shrank with horror at the sight of a frightful spectacle which appeared before me.—The day was just closed, the curtains of the temple were drawn, and all the lamps lighted. Ordalia, covered with a veil, was pouring forth her complaints at the foot of the statue of Irminsul, whilst Iliska, as sovereign pontiff, and the rest of the priests, surrounded an altar, upon which was bound a child of nine or ten years old, that was going to be sacrificed\*.

“I had always detested these abominable sacrifices; and heaven, which doubtless inspired me at this moment, restoring me all my force—‘Stop, inhuman wretches,’ cried I, ‘do you imagine, by this impious sacrifice, to disarm divine anger? No, your fatal hour is arrived; the enemy triumphs, and is within our walls; we shall all perish; but at least this inno-

\* We have already seen, that these horrible sacrifices were, in fact, prescribed by the religion of these barbarous people.



cent child shall not be immolated.' On saying this, I rushed towards the altar; I drove off the priests with my sword, and unbound the child, who prostrated himself at my feet. It is the same child you saw with me in prison. The surprise and terror, which the news I had brought imparted, rendered Iliska and the other pontiffs motionless. Ordalia, lifting up her veil, ran and threw herself into my arms; but she gave a mournful cry on seeing me covered with blood, and tore her veil to apply it to my wound; I turned towards her father—'Iliska,' said I, 'thou hast long promised me the hand of thy daughter; thy gloomy suspicions have always retarded the performance of that solemn engagement; but her faith is mine, and I claim it; a barbarous conqueror, the ferocious Rotbold, whose hands are stained with so much blood, is going to massacre us all; I would fain die the husband of Ordalia: consider, Iliska, it is thou who hast ruined us; and, as a reward for all I have done for thee, give me thy daughter; and let a moment of glory and happiness still precede our last gasp.' 'I consent,' cried Iliska, 'in hopes of leaving an avenger behind me, shouldst thou survive me.' On uttering these words, he took my hand, all reeking with blood, and joined it to that of his daughter; and he received the sacred vow which united us for ever together.

"I prostrated myself before the altar, and lifting up my eyes to heaven—'Creator of the universe, in this temple, so often prophaned by cruel superstition, receive,' cried I, 'the homage of a pure heart.—Surely may I expect felicity, in an union formed before

this altar, upon which I have just rescued devoted innocence from death? The sword of destruction is suspended over my head, but thou art able to remove it; if it be thy pleasure that I should live for Ordalia, I swear to adopt this child, and to consecrate my future life to virtue as well as to love.' As I was thus speaking, I had placed the child upon the altar, and kept pressing him to my heart; he trembled on finding himself again upon the place where he had just been lying as a victim. He clung fast round my neck; Ordalia then took him to her arms, and repeated the oath I had sworn. At this moment the noise of arms, of drums, and trumpets, announced the approach of our enemies, who, having searched in vain for Iliska in the citadel, came at last to the temple in quest of him: the iron gates of that edifice were closed; they were proof to the fury of the assailants, and we determined not to open them. We heard great noise and agitation without; but no measure appeared to be taken to force the place; we were ignorant of the enemy's intention; and passed more than two hours in this state of suspense, when, all on a sudden, we saw the flames catch the wood-work which surrounded the great altar of Irminful; at the same instant, the fire spreading with great rapidity, a wall fell in, and made a considerable breach; and immediately the temple was thronged with troops. At the sight of this, Iliska, giving up all hopes, drew a dagger, which he always wore in his belt, and gave himself a mortal wound: I grasped my sword, and, with all the intrepidity which love and despair could inspire, rushed towards the soldiers, who were endeavouring to carry

off Ordalia. The desire of falling gloriously in her presence, raising me above myself, I sustained to advantage, although wounded and unsupported, a combat of several minutes against more than thirty men. But Ordalia, all dismayed, and the child, whose life I had saved, seeing me on the point of yielding to numbers, came and threw themselves in the midst of the soldiers: at the sight of this, all my strength failed me, and I fell down, without sensation, at the feet of Ordalia. It must now be your task, my dear Ordalia," continued Diaulas, "to go on with the story; for you alone have been witness to the greater part of the events, which followed those I have been relating."—At these words, Ordalia, wiping away the tear, which the remembrance of her father brought in her eye, resumed the narrative, as will be seen in the ensuing chapter.

## CHAPTER XI.

CONTINUATION OF THE STORY OF ORDALIA.

Je ne vois que des tours que la cendre à couvertes,  
Un fleuve teint de sang, des campagnes désertes !

*Andromaque de RACINE.*

Non, je ne serai point complice de ses crimes ;  
Qu'il nous prenne, s'il veut, pour dernières victimes.

*The Same.*

“FIGURE to yourself, sir,” said Ordalia, “the horrors of my situation !—My wretched father, stabbed by his own hand, in my arms ;—my garments stained with his blood ; my husband expiring at the foot of the altar, before which I had just received his plighted faith ; the child we had adopted was extended on his body, and made the vaults of the temple resound with lamentable cries ; myself surrounded by savage troops, unable either to afford Diaraus succour, or to put an end to my own existence ; our worship destroyed, the profanation of the temple, its conflagration, the statues of our gods overturned and broken to pieces, the frightful clamour of the triumphant destroyers of my country, the dreadful light that the devouring flames which surrounded us spread on every side ; all concurred to fill my soul with terroure, dismay, and despair. The conquerors had thrown open the temple gates, and I resisted the attempts of the soldiers who endeavoured to drag me to the side which had not yet taken fire, when Rotbold entered the edifice, and



hastily approached me: but with what horror was I seized, when, in this general of the french troops, I recognised the base and cruel knight who had carried me off a few months before, and whom your generous companion in arms put to flight. The audacious Rotbold accosting me—‘Come, madam,’ said he, ‘deign to follow me, and calm your fears.’ On saying this, he presumed to lay hold of me with his impious hands; I drew back with terror: but sustained, inspired by love, I was able to conceal at the bottom of my heart my resentment and my hatred.—‘Sir,’ replied I, look at these objects which surround me:—there is my father, he breathes no more; that young man who has fainted away, and that child, are my brothers; if you wish me to live, take care of their lives, and do not separate us.’ ‘Your request shall be granted,’ returned Rotbold; ‘be under no uneasiness on their account: my love to you ought to assure you of my generosity towards them.’ Upon this he gave orders that they should be conveyed to his camp; and offering me his support, I was forced to lean upon that cruel arm which had just consummated the destruction of my religion, my family, and my country.

“The day had not yet appeared; but when we were gone out of Eresbourg, the horrid conflagration of the temple, and soon after that of the whole fortrefs, sufficed to light us on our way, and to illuminate the desert fields through which we passed. On arriving at the camp, Rotbold prevented my desires, by informing me, that I might go to the tent whither my two brothers had a eady been conducted: Diaulas had recovered his senses, and I had time to inform him of

my

my artifice; he objected to give in to it; but at length he consented with extreme repugnancy. Rotbold, who flattered himself he should at length seduce me, treated me with every appearance of extreme generosity. He ordered the greatest care to be taken of Diaulas; nor did he quit the camp till he was in condition to be removed without danger: we then all departed. Rotbold carried away no other captives than Diaulas, our adopted child, and myself; all the chiefs of our party having either fallen in combat, or been massacred after the victory. Taking with him the treasures of my unfortunate countrymen, and dragging us in his train, he made us traverse a considerable part of our unhappy country in our way to this place. I passed by the loved spot where I first saw the light; there had I been born amidst a free and flourishing people; and I could now perceive no vestige of habitations remaining—the houses, the men, the trees, had all disappeared. I perceived nothing but deserts, and here and there a fugitive or a slave; and myself I found a captive, and under the yoke of a hated conqueror. The murderous spite of despotism, more active and more terrible in its ravages than that of time itself, had mowed down and destroyed every thing in the short space of a few months. —At length we arrived at this castle; and, in a few days, Rotbold talked to me, without constraint, of his odious passion. From the first interview, I answered him in such a manner as destroyed all his hopes; and he at last had recourse to Diaulas, in order to engage him to plead in his behalf. But when the tyrant announced his design upon me, it was no longer possible for

Diaulas to degrade himself by acting a false part, and he immediately declared to Rotbold the whole truth. The anger of Rotbold was extreme, and his menaces terrible. He came in quest of me: 'You have deceived me,' said he; 'nor do I yet know whether the avowal of this marriage be not a new imposture; but were you the spouse of Valamir (such was the name Diaulas had taken), yet should not I acknowledge the legality of a marriage solemnised upon the altars of error, which I have irretrievably overturned: your vows were addressed to false deities, and are null and void.—You are in my power; I adore you: I offer you a rank and fortune, which are worthy of you; and can you hesitate between the conqueror of Eresbourg and his slave? Consider of this, madam; if you consent to receive my hand, I shall treat Valamir as the brother of my wife, and shall give him all your father's treasure; but if you persist in your refusal, I shall consider him no longer but as a hated rival, and you will then see that I know how to avenge myself.'

"At this horrid language, all my prudence forsook me, and I gave myself up, without restraint, to my indignation; I stirred up the fury of Rotbold to its highest pitch: he vowed to deprive my husband of liberty; and, in effect, he was thrown into a dungeon on the same day. Mirva, our child by adoption, whom we had always declared to be our brother, that he might not be separated from us, was removed to my apartment. This amiable child united with extreme tenderness of disposition a courage and understanding far beyond his years; his attachment and unbounded gratitude to Diaulas were sufficient to render him

him dear to me ; he intreated me to obtain permission for him to partake the captivity of my husband. Rotbold, who imagined he was charged with some message from me, refused my request : but Mirva was not discouraged ; he spoke himself to Rotbold, fell at his feet, and conjured him in so pressing a manner to grant him his petition, that Rotbold, probably out of fear of showing too much barbarity of disposition before me, consented to what he ardently desired, and at the same moment Mirva flew to the dungeon of his benefactor. From that day, persecuted without intermission, I was exposed to every kind of torment and apprehension : my cruel oppressor continually threatened to sacrifice Diaulas to his resentment, yet, being persuaded that in such case I should not fail to lay violent hands upon myself, he did not venture to take away his life ; but, desirous to have recourse to every extremity which he imagined would tire out my constancy, he removed me from the sumptuous apartment which had been allotted me, and I was conducted into one of the prisons of the castle, a part of the subterraneous vaults where my unhappy husband languished. I did not reflect without emotion, that the same building confined us both, and that his dungeon was perhaps contiguous to mine ; this idea induced me to examine the inside of my prison with anxious attention. The cell was spacious, and I remarked at one end of it that the wall was full of crevices ; I applied my ear to these openings, and at first heard nothing ; but in the course of a few days, I could distinguish some noise : I then knocked against the wall, and received the like signal in reply. Hope and love inspiring in-



genuity, I formed a project which seemed impracticable, and which nevertheless I had the good fortune to execute: a large iron nail having fallen from the door, I picked it up, and concealed it. My treatment being somewhat less rigorous than that of the other victims of Rotbold, I was indulged with a large bed with curtains, and allowed a lamp during the night. On a pretext which I had invented, I prevailed on my keeper to place my bed against the decayed wall, of which I have been speaking; and as soon as night set in I began my task, by endeavouring to enlarge one of the crevices. The curtains of the bed hid the progress of my work, and having taken some other necessary precautions, my gaoler never entertained the least suspicion of my enterprise; for my own part, having no other occupation, I proceeded in my work in a surprising manner: on the eighth day, I perceived that I was seconded on the other side the wall, and that a similar proceeding took place there. I then had no doubt but that the dungeon, from which this wall only separated me, was actually that of my husband; my resolution assumed new vigour; and, at the end of three weeks, the crevice became large enough to allow me to thrust in my arm; this experiment I tried, calling upon Diaulas; I could see nothing through the aperture, because there was no light allowed in that dungeon except at the time in which the meals were brought; but I discovered that some one was approaching the wall, and quickly I distinguished the motion of an arm that was seeking mine: at last I felt a hand, I seized it with transport, and finding it extremely small, I sighed, and conceived

it

it could be only that of Mirva: I then imagined that Diaulas, who did not approach the wall, was doubtlessly chained, and perhaps in a dying condition, and I shed a flood of tears. In the mean while, the hand still kept hold of mine, and squeezed it in a very expressive manner; I inquired after Diaulas—I conjured him to make answer; but no one spoke a word. I could hear nothing but interrupted moans; and at last the hand quitted mine. I sunk into the deepest despair; I imagined that Diaulas was no more: nothing can express what I felt, on considering that he had expired at that very instant, and so near me, without my having had the sad consolation of receiving his farewell, and catching his last breath. Not being, however, certain of my misfortune, I continued my labour; and it was completed much sooner than I had calculated, for towards the middle of the following night, while I was busy at work, some large pieces of mortar and huge masses of stone giving way with violence, left a considerable aperture in the wall, through which it was easy to pass (15). At first I did not venture into the dungeon; restrained by dread, I continued motionless and chilled with terror at the breach, and hardly had I the courage to listen.—I heard sighing, and stifled groans:—then I roused myself; and taking a lamp, I entered the breach: I advanced with dread. After proceeding a few steps, I started at the sound of an unknown voice, which uttered these words: ‘Come, thou angel of consolation!’—I approached—and I beheld, extended upon a bed of straw, a young person, who appeared to be dying; she held out her arms to me, I rushed to her embrace, and we mingled

mingled our tears together. Sacred and moving ties of misfortune!—this unknown person, whom I pressed to my bosom, had already acquired all the claims of tender friendship upon my heart; her groans pierced me to the soul; deprived myself so long of all comfort, the hopes of consoling her afforded me a consolation which for a while suspended the sense of my own distress. ‘Dear companion in misfortune,’ cried I, ‘take courage, heaven grows propitious to us, since it is pleased to unite our destiny.’ ‘Alas!’ replied she, ‘it is too late; I feel my own at its termination; and when you know the horrors of it, you will not lament my death.—The time is precious to me,’ continued she, ‘I will avail myself of the little strength which is left me to pour forth my last sorrows into your bosom, that you one day may do justice to my memory.’ At these words, she wiped away her tears; and, after a few moments silence, thus went on:—‘My name is Azoline,’ said she, ‘my birth is obscure, and my father possessed but a moderate fortune.—Before ignominy and despair had withered my bloom, I was considered handsome; and my father, who was naturally ambitious, forming the highest expectations from that frail endowment, educated me with the greatest care. I was of a tender disposition: I loved, and was loved again!—A young french knight, whose name is Roger, was the object of this unhappy passion; he asked my hand, but he was without fortune; my father discouraged his hopes, he left the country, and I have not seen him since. My ill fate brought the ferocious Rothold into our province; he saw me, and appeared to be enamoured with me.—

He

He wrote to me at first in secret, and had recourse to all the arts of seduction; I treated him with contempt: he then asked me in marriage; and my father, in spite of my tears and my resistance, promised him my hand. Rotbold, however, informed my father, that important family considerations obliged him to conceal his marriage for a while; and it was agreed between them, that I should be brought to the castle, and be there married in secret; and that, until the declaration of my nuptials should take place, I should reside with him under the name of his ward. Hither was I dragged: Rotbold desired, that the ceremony should be performed within the castle-walls, without the privacy even of his household; and that the priest should be his own domestic chaplain. In this manner was every thing managed. My father, who had accompanied me to the castle, departed the next day.—As for me, the wretched victim of his ambition, I had not even the consolation of innocence to flee to; for my antipathy to Rotbold overwhelmed me with remorse. I asked for the priest who had joined us together, to communicate to him my scruples and my distress: I saw him several times, and I still repeated that I felt an unconquerable aversion to Rotbold, and that I could not tear from my heart the criminal passion I cherished there for another. For three weeks I remained the most wretched of women; when Rotbold, returning from the chase, entered my chamber, attended by a squire whom I had never observed in his suite; struck, however, at the appearance of the man, and looking at him with attention, what was my astonishment to recognise the very priest who had married



married me, and had daily heard my confessions!—He was, in fact, an impostor—the squire of Rotbold, and the accomplice in his crimes. The latter having learned, through this wretch, to what a degree I detested him, far from blushing at his crime, gloried in it, as likewise did Tryphon, for so was this unworthy squire named, who was the basest and most wicked of men. Rotbold informed me, he should at last have married me in reality, had I loved him; but being acquainted with my sentiments, he was now determined to see me no more; however, he would give me a considerable dowery if I would marry Tryphon, and remove with him to a distant province. I replied with all the severity that hatred and just indignation could inspire. Rotbold then declared, that if I persisted in refusing his offers, he would throw me into a dungeon for the rest of my life; and would spread a report that I had gone off with one of his pages.—‘And what is honour now to me,’ cried I; ‘did I not lose it when my dark destiny conducted me to this impious abode?—I am dishonoured, but I yet am innocent!—’ ‘Tyrant, thou mayest dispose of my reputation and my life: my virtue still remains; and that it is not in thy power to snatch from me.—Thy execrable imposition, it is true, covers me with shame; but henceforwards I may, at least, hate thee without remorse!’ The monster made no reply; but, aided by Tryphon, he dragged me to this dungeon, which is now going to prove my grave!’ Here the unhappy Azoline stopped: her tears choked her utterance, and her strength failed her, in a manner, that convinced me her last hour was at hand. I was kneeling close by her

her side; she gently pressed my hands between her own, and letting her head fall upon my bosom—‘ If the cruel Rotbold,’ said she, ‘ should, agreeably to his menaces, have spread reports injurious to my reputation, deign to bear witness to the truth which I have deposited in your bosom.—Above all, may Roger one day be convinced of my innocence.’——‘ Yes,’ cried I, ‘ and I invoke Irminsul and all our gods to attest, that, if I ever revisit the light of day, Azoline shall be justified; and if we be both doomed to perish in this horrible dungeon, let us then consider, that after death, at least, when translated to the shining abodes of felicity, we shall there enjoy immortal vengeance.’——‘ What sayest thou,’ resumed Azoline; ‘ must I yet have to deplore thy errors?—Thy religion promises eternal vengeance:—thus, then, does it condemn oppressed innocence to the torment of hating for ever!——No, no; when the just are delivered from the bonds of life, celestial goodness will ever banish hatred and resentment from their minds; and their hearts then, adapted to the enjoyment of supreme felicity, can only taste the delicious transports of gratitude, admiration, and love. O God!’ continued she, joining her hands together, ‘ this unfortunate stranger loses the sense of her own fate in her concern for mine; she softens the horror of my last moments; deign to recompense her compassionate attention—deign to enlighten her mind, and lead her to happiness.’ On finishing these words, Azoline again sunk into my arms; her eyes closed, but she still breathed. In her behalf I invoked Vanadis, the powerful and consoling goddess of love and hope (16), but, alas! it was in vain.

vain.—She gently squeezed my hand, opened her eyes once more, fixed them upon me, and soon shut them again for ever. I bathed her cold cheek with my tears; I then covered her face with my veil, and, overwhelmed with commiseration and terour, I returned to my dungeon. Reflecting, however, upon this melancholy adventure, I conceived the idea of converting it to the purpose of my own liberation. In the design I had formed, it was necessary to stoop to act a feigned part; but I thought the horrors of my situation justified the artifice. I demanded to see Rotbold; he instantly came to me: I had previously laid open the curtains of my bed, and placed the lamp upon the breach of the wall. At this unexpected sight, Rotbold, all audacious and ferocious as he was, drew back and quaked. I told him of all I had done; and did not conceal from him that the unhappy Azoline, before she expired, had related her whole story. Rotbold, who had listened without interrupting me, replied when I had left off speaking, and endeavoured to justify himself, by calumniating the unfortunate victim of his wickedness. I entered into no refutation of his falsehoods; and after a moment's silence—‘I am the more inclined to believe you,’ said I, ‘as before that fatal adventure I had almost resolved to give you my hand.’ At these words, Rotbold threw himself at my feet.—‘Hear me, sir,’ said I, ‘my heart is more ambitious than tender; I can no longer bear captivity; I make sacrifice of my duty and love, but I am determined to be your wife; I will reign where I have lain in bondage: the example of Azoline inspires me with just suspicion, and you shall not obtain my

my hand but by celebrating our nuptials with a splendour and notoriety which can free me from all kind of fears and distrust.' I then gave him to understand, that I required him to proclaim a tournament, and that thus all the neighbouring nobility should be witness to the marriage ceremony: he consented to every thing I asked. I furthermore declared, that I acquiesced in his former offers respecting Diaulas, but that I would not inform him of his fate until I had been solemnly betrothed, and had returned from the temple; till which time, I wished him to remain entirely ignorant of my resolution. Rotbold subscribed to all my desires: he instantly took me from my prison, which I could not leave without shedding another tear over the misfortunes of the unhappy Azoline; but I cherished, at least, the hope, that ere long we should be both avenged. Rotbold immediately proclaimed the tournament; and I, at length, beheld the happy day of my deliverance, and the just chastisement of a monster."



## CHAPTER XII.

A FIRST CONSOLATION.

*Qu'un ami véritable est une douce chose !*

LA FONTAINE.

AS soon as the fair Ordalia had made an end of her story, Ifambard observed to Diaulas, that he had a secret to impart, and he led him into an adjacent closet. After having shut the door, “you are ignorant,” said he, “of the real name of your deliverer; I am going to inform you of it;—it is one of the Knights of the Swan; it is Oliver.”—Diaulas, at these words, started with surprise and horror.—“Yes,” resumed Ifambard, it is the murderer of your sister, but at the same time the generous knight who formerly saved your father’s life; and it is he who snatched the dying Ordalia from the hands of her ravisher; she owed him then her life and her honour: it is he who, furthermore, on this day, restores you a wife and liberty.—Do you imagine that a crime committed in the first emotions of blind fury, a crime founded upon error, of which you yourself were the fatal cause; a crime, in fine, which has been expiated by the most excruciating remorse, can dispense you from the gratitude due to so many important services?”—“No, truly,” returned Diaulas, “but what can I be able to do?”—“Every thing,” replied Ifambard; “it is, indeed, impossible to console him, and dry up the source of his tears;

tears ; but you alone can mitigate the horror of his situation."—"Speak," interrupted Diaulas, "my life is at his service, let him dispose of it."—"Well, generous Diaulas," returned Isambard, "restore then a son to Witikind. I have observed, by your own narrative, that, at the bottom of your soul, you despise a worship stained with the most abominable superstitions ; renounce it, and get yourself instructed in the principles of our faith."—"I know them already," replied Diaulas, taking a book out of his bosom ; "the dying Celanira put this into my hands ; it contains them all ; this book, by you held so sacred, and become so precious in my estimation, I have perused, in compliance with the orders of my unfortunate sister, and with so much the more advantage, as it is written in my own language \*. The sublimity of its moral doctrines has reached my heart, and convinced my reason : in the bottom of my dungeon I have meditated upon it ; and there it was that I resolved to embrace a religion which could impart every virtue, and afford every consolation."—"Well," resumed Isambard, "you ought to fly then to the arms of an unhappy father, who has already regretted you ! who would pardon and receive you with transport !"—"But," returned Diaulas, "to live under the laws of Charlemagne !"—"I would not recommend it," said Isambard, "did there still exist in Saxony a party in favour of liberty, however weak it may be ; but you have no longer any country ; all is overcome, all has submitted, and you must be under the necessity of seeking an asy-

\* Charlemagne ordered the New Testament to be translated into Saxon.

lum in a foreign land; make choice therefore of this, where you will find the wisest laws, and be able to afford consolation to your unfortunate father. Such is the most anxious wish of the wretched Oliver; such, Diaulas, is the only proof of gratitude you can give him." "Haste, Sir," replied Diaulas, "haste and inform him, that in one hour I will set off for the court of Charlemagne." Upon this, Isambard embraced Diaulas with equal tenderness and delight: they still prolonged the conversation to a considerable length. Diaulas informed Isambard, that the unhappy Celanira having intreated him never to disclose the fatal secret which she had carried with her to the grave, he had not even communicated it to Ordalia; they agreed that he should not see Oliver again, the interview being equally distressing to both; and after making some other arrangements, Isambard sought his friend with all the eagerness, which the certitude of being the bearer of a first consolation could excite. And when he had given an account of his interview with Diaulas, he had the inexpressible pleasure to perceive a beam of hope kindle in the eyes of his friend. While the latter was expressing his warmest gratitude to Isambard, they were interrupted by the appearance of Mirva, who was sent by Diaulas to wait for a letter which Oliver was to write to Witikind. Mirva knowing that Oliver was the deliverer of his adopted father, threw himself into his arms, and wept, and kissed the generous hands which had disarmed Rotbold, and broken the fetters of Diaulas. Oliver received with great tenderness the caresses of this amiable child; for while he was holding him in his arms,

arms, Ifambard related his story. After having heard the affecting narrative, Oliver wrote to Witikind, and gave his letter to Mirva, who immediately carried it to Diaulas. Prettexts were invented to hinder Ordalia and Diaulas from taking leave of Oliver; the travellers were accommodated with horses, and every thing that was necessary for their journey; and they sat off on that very day, taking with them their adopted child, and some other captives of their own country, who had been found in the prisons of the castle. Ifambard made inquiry after Tryphon, the vile squire of Rothold, and the accomplice in his crimes, as has been already related in the story of the unhappy Azoline; but the wretch, together with his master, had made his escape. Nothing entertaining the two friends any longer on this spot, they determined to continue their route. Giaffar, who was likewise going into the duchy of Cleves, was desirous of accompanying them the rest of the journey; and though he was engaged in the opposite party, they nevertheless consented to take him; for, in those days, difference of opinion produced neither animosity nor hatred; they fought with intrepid valour; but, out of the field of battle, enemies were considered as men, as fellow creatures; and it was accounted glorious to treat them with generosity (17.)



## CHAPTER XIII.

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*THE TABLETS.*

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O, touchante simplicité,  
 Console ici mes yeux et reçois mon hommage ;  
 De l'aimable hospitalité,  
 J'y retrouve l'antique usage.  
 Dans les discours, la vérité,  
 Les graces sans frivolité,  
 Le sentiment sans étalage.

THOMAS.

GIAFFAR, and the Knights of the Swan, after six days journey, entered a forest, in which they lost their way ; they were now in the duchy of Cleves, and not far from the palace of the princess ; but having gone out of their road, they were unable to recover the path ; tired with their fruitless research, they determined to stop where they were, and send their squires in quest of the road. The squires, dividing themselves, proceeded over the forest ; and the three knights, alighting from their horses, retired under an oak tree. Oliver and Giaffar remained upon their legs, leaning against the trunk of an oak ; and Isambard seated himself upon a heap of dried leaves ; for it was now the decline of autumn, and the trees had already shed all their verdure. The conversation ran upon Beatrice and Gerold, and Giaffar expressed extreme uneasiness at being engaged on the side of the latter. " How pleasing would it be to me," added he, " if, instead of fighting in an unjust cause, I were accompanying two  
 such

such valued friends in the defence of so interesting a person." "And the more so," said Isambard, "as Beatrice is reported to be the most beautiful princess in the universe." "The most beautiful!" retorted Giaffar, "I cannot believe it, if"—he stopped short, heaved a deep sigh, and his eyes filled with tears! Isambard did not venture to ask him any questions, and Giaffar changed the conversation. While Giaffar was speaking, Isambard thought he felt a stone beneath him, among the leaves upon which he sat; and being desirous to remove it, he was much surprised, on observing what he took up in his hand to be, instead of a stone, a set of beautiful golden tablets. They were open; and the knights looking with great curiosity on what they contained, perceived that some detached thoughts had been written in the first leaves; they there read what follows:

"If princes be in general ungrateful, and incapable of friendship, it is because that, little as they have read, or observed what passes around them, they have nevertheless acquired the idea, that they are not beloved for themselves alone; hence they are solicitous only of forming agreeable connexions, utterly despairing ever to find friends.

"Great fortune and elevated rank often deprive their possessors of the gratification of being beloved; people are attached to them by interest; and the attention being engrossed by such views, it is taken off from the contemplation of worth. As the sole object is to mislead and manage them, more application is made to the discovery of their follies, than their good qualities; men are little anxious to find them amiable;

and this alone often hinders them from receiving the justice due to their merit. The prince, who has never had a friend, would have found many, and sincere ones too, had he not been a prince.

“Bad examples, afforded by princes and the great, corrupt public morals; but it is the stupidity of the people which creates the vices and crimes of those who govern them. When the multitude shall feel its own strength, and be sensible of all its rights, the tales of the fairies will appear more rational than history; and conquerors and despots will be considered as beings of a more monstrous and fabulous nature than magicians, ogres, or giants.

“What would be thought of a father who should thus say to his children: ‘I am desirous of having the half of the field belonging to one of my neighbours; I wish to humble another; to take vengeance on a third: go then, and ravage their country, and furnish me besides with the money necessary for such enterprise; for there is nothing more heroic and just than to sacrifice fortune, expose life, and cut the throats of your fellow creatures, for the indulgence of my passions and caprice.’ All sovereigns repeat, that they are the fathers of their people; but what do they require at their children’s hands?”

“The writer of these observations,” said Giaffar, “expresses them with a frankness which pleases me.”

“Yes,” returned Isambard, “I am sure this author loves truth only, and never flattered any body: I should be glad to know whether this be the production of a man or a woman.—But here are some verses which, perhaps,

perhaps, will satisfy my curiosity. At these words, Isambard read aloud the following lines:

Dull languor, sad and irksome care,  
 The frequent sigh, the falling tear,  
 Intrusive guests, my hours employ,  
 And rob them of their wonted joy.  
 Youth's giddy pastime now is o'er,  
 Its pleasing follies charm no more ;  
 Forlorn, my lost delights I mourn,  
 And sigh for joys that ne'er return.  
 When passions cease the breast to warm,  
 The voice of wisdom well may charm ;  
 But while they rule with potent sway,  
 And while the willing crowds obey,  
 How sad to prove unwelcome truth,  
 And age's lesson learn in youth,  
 That life's gay prospects all are vain,  
 Its gilded pleasures end in pain.  
 Hence, then, the source of all my care ;  
 For reason prompts the starting tear.  
 My prying search has torn the veil  
 That guises fiction's pleasing tale.  
 All kind delusions lose their pow'r,  
 Nor more can cheat the vacant hour.  
 Away the fairy visions flee,  
 And yield to sad reality.

" Ah! 'tis a woman," cried Isambard ; " I am delighted at that."—" 'Tis certainly," said Giaffar, " one of the ladies of the duchess's court."—" Or, perhaps, Beatrice herself," replied Isambard, briskly: " would it were she! With what pleasure should I combat for one who thinks and expresses herself in this manner!"—" It is not at all likely," said Oliver, " that a princess



should have written what we have been reading.”——  
“What!” replied Isambard, “is it impossible, then, that a princess should be reasonable? Besides, fame speaks so highly of Beatrice, of her knowledge, her taste for science and the fine arts!—Observe, that the verses bespeak a woman who has applied to serious studies from her youth, and who never was in love. All this agrees with the account we hear of the duchess of Cleves.”——“My dear Isambard,” said Giaffar, “I foresee you will fall desperately in love with Beatrice: I have frequently remarked you never speak of her with unconcern.”——“I believe I may venture to assure you,” replied Isambard, “that friendship will ever be my ruling passion; besides, can you suppose me so mad as to form an attachment for a person of her rank, who has disdained the homage of Gerold, and so many other princes? Yet, if these tablets belong to her, I must allow it is very possible to love her, in spite of hope.” As Isambard finished these words, he saw Zemni approach, who informed the knights, that, on getting out of the forest, he had seen a large mansion upon the slope of a hill; and, having gone to it, to make inquiry after the different roads which led to the duchess’s castle, and to the camp of the confederated princes, the master of the house, who was a venerable old man, invited the knights under his roof, promising to furnish them with guides, and every information of which they stood in need.——The knights accepted the invitation; and, being conducted by Zemni, they immediately repaired to the old man’s habitation. They distinguished it at a distance, by the  
signals

signals of hospitality with which it was decorated (18). These were, according to the usages of the time, helmets upon the points of lances, placed on the house-top, in order to give notice to the traveller who had lost his way, that the abode belonged to a knight, who offered him reception \*. The knights arrived at a spacious, but simple mansion, surrounded with fine gardens, and most agreeably situate. Theobald, for such was the owner's name, came to bid them welcome. This venerable old man, accompanied by Sylvia, his only daughter, conducted the guests into a grand gallery.—The amiable Sylvia disarmed the knights, and afterwards went to prepare them refreshments, which she brought, and presented herself †. The knights having informed the old man of the object of their journey; “Sir,” said Theobald, addressing himself to the two friends, “I learn, with joy, that the illustrious Knights of the Swan are going to combat in behalf of the most virtuous and most charming princess in the universe—I am her subject; I have had the honour to be her preceptor; and you may conceive to what degree I am affected at the persecution she is suffering! Long retired from the court, I have fixed myself in this agreeable retreat, in the vicinity of the castle of the

\* I hope, that, ere long, in France, the three-coloured standard; placed in like manner through the whole country, will indicate the same thing.

† All these particulars are taken from the manners of the ages of chivalry.—See the work of Mr. de Ste. Palaye.

princess, who, before the arrival of the troops, frequently visited my solitude. I am now separated from her by the camp of the confederate princes. These princes, however, have had the generosity to declare, that my house shall remain unmolested, even during the war, should war take place; and that the knights, who come under my roof, shall find an asylum there, as heretofore; even they who come with the intention of combating in the cause of the duchess. Gerold, and the other chiefs, have forbidden their soldiers, under severe penalties, to approach my habitation; and I live in as much tranquillity as, at the present moment, can be enjoyed. I am even frequently honoured with the visits of the confederate princes; the knights of their party are almost always meeting other knights, who are the champions of Beatrice; and these interviews are conducted with equal politeness on both sides.—At this very instant,” continued the old man, “several knights, of either party, are walking in my gardens; and you see, upon this ceiling, their armour suspended by the side of your own.”—“Yes,” said Giaffar, “I recognise the armour and green plume of Gerold.”—Upon this, Isambard, being curious to know the device of that prince, arose; and, examining the buckler, saw a horse represented upon it, in the act of leaping over a high gate; and these words were written around the shield: *Obstacles and danger inflame my ardour*.—“That white and fire-coloured armour,” said the old man, “belongs to the duke of Spoleto, the friend of Gerold, and, like him, full of spirit and courage, as the device manifests, which represents  
a lofty

a lofty cascade falling down a rugged rock, with these words : *Splendour, elevation, activity*.—This prince, the mortal enemy of Charlemagne and the French nation, enjoys at this moment the double satisfaction of not seeing a single knight of that country on the side of the princes, and of knowing that there are many in the adverse party !”—“ And that gray armour, so plain and modest,” said Isambard, “ to whom does that belong ? ”—“ To Roger, a young French knight,” replied Theobald.”—On hearing this name, Isambard recollected, that the lover of the unfortunate Azoline was so called ; he looked at the device, which represented a reed, under which were read the following words : *Ever agitated, never broken down*. After this examination, Isambard anxiously desiring to obtain information respecting a more interesting matter, but embarrassed without knowing the reason, and dreading being undeceived, he approached the old man, and, with some confusion, related the adventure of the tablets, which he showed him. Theobald immediately cried, that he knew them, and that they belonged to the duchess. At these words, a violent throbbing at the heart warned Isambard, that the prediction of Giaffar might really be accomplished—“ I confess,” said Isambard, “ I have had the indiscretion to read these tablets ; but, Sir, look at the writing ; tell me, is it truly the hand of the princess ? ”—“ Yes,” replied Theobald ; “ and, doubtless, she must have written the verses in the forest, where she frequently walked alone, on leaving this mansion ; but, Sir, you will deliver the tablets to her yourself ; and she will be happy at the chance which



threw them into the hands of one of her defenders."—  
“ May I venture,” said Ifambard, “ to ask you another question? You have just been speaking of the war as an uncertain event; is it supposed, then, that the duchess will at length choose a husband among the princes who are assembled to oppose her?”—“ Sir,” replied Theobald, “ Beatrice has conducted herself, in this respect, with so much discretion, that even the knights who are met to defend her, and have been with her court for some months past, are yet ignorant whether all these preparations will terminate in war, or in a tournament and wedding. The truce expires in eight days; the duchess will then be summoned by the princes to declare her intentions; until then, they will remain an impenetrable secret.” Ifambard was going to continue his questions, when the doors of the gallery opened, and the count of Bavaria, and duke of Spoleto, made their appearance. The former uttered an exclamation of joy on perceiving Giaffar; he flew to him, and embraced him with the demonstrations of tender friendship. Giaffar presented the Knights of the Swan to him, informing him, he owed his life to them. Gerold, although apprised of the motive of their journey, treated them with equal grace and politeness; even Ifambard, although excessively prejudiced against him, could not refrain from admiring the nobleness of his countenance, and the gracefulness of his whole deportment. This prince wished to take Giaffar with him to his camp; but the knight declared that, his two friends having promised Theobald to remain a few days at his house, he was desirous to pass  
that

that time in their company. When the princes were gone, Theobald and the knights sat down to table.—Immediately after supper, the old man withdrew. As it was no later than eight o'clock, the knights met in Giaffar's apartment, in order to prolong their conversation till ten.

## CHAPTER XIV.

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*THE ORIGIN OF THE ORGAN.*

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The imprison'd winds, releas'd, with joyful sound,  
Proclaim their liberty around.

ANON.

Il n'est ame si revêche qui ne se sente touchée de quelque révérence,  
à considérer cette vastité sombre de nos églises. et ouïr le son  
dévotieux de nos orgues.

MONTAGNE.

OLIVER, who had been less absorbed in grief since the adventure of Ordalia, took a more active part than usual in the conversation; the interesting appearance of Giaffar, and his deep melancholy, had disposed his heart in his favour, ever since their first meeting; and the singularity of his device \* excited his curiosity. He spoke to him of the vow he had made, to be always travelling (19), and he expressed a desire to know the motive of it. Giaffar replied, that he could refuse nothing to friends who were so dear to him; that, as a sacred duty obliged him to conceal his misfortunes, he requested their promise never to reveal the secrets he was going to deposit in their breasts.—The two friends made the vow he required; and Giaffar began his astonishing history in this manner:

\* A foreign plant upon the summit of a mountain; and these words, *To find her, or die*, as has been already mentioned.

“ I am

"I am thirty-six years old, and my career is already finished! I have run it with eclat, perhaps with glory. Fortune and love strewed my path with flowers, until I arrived at the very verge of the gulph which was to swallow me up.—I have lost every thing, even my very name; the East still blesses it; the love of a grateful people cherishes its memory; and yet I cannot own it! Condemned to obscurity, my fame is become a stranger to me; I cannot enjoy it; and, being dead to the universe, I receive, as it were in the silence of the grave, the approbation and eulogium of my contemporaries! In a word, you see an unfortunate victim of despotism, and a melancholy example of the vicissitudes of human life—I am Barmecide (20)." At this name, a name so great and renowned, the Knights of the Swan arose from their seats.—A deep sentiment of admiration and respect rendered them motionless for some minutes. In generous minds, proscription and misfortune increase the interest which talents and virtue create! The two friends looked at Barmecide with eager curiosity, as if it were the first time they had seen him. The emotion and surprise they experienced were expressed on their countenances in so moving a manner, that Barmecide was greatly affected at it:—"O! my friends," cried he, "you restore me to existence again!"—On saying this, he rushed into their arms; and, after having received their tender embrace, he thus resumed his narrative:

"My father, who was born in the dominions of Gerold, had a strong passion for travelling. He communicated this turn to my mother, who was always his inseparable companion. I was born in Persia; my



father was my sole preceptor, and instructed me from facts and observations founded upon experience, and not by taking his lessons from books; he made me study nature in the countries and deserts through which we were incessantly passing; and he taught me to know mankind, by judging of them in a mass, from their laws and social institutions. As soon as we arrived in a new region, my father informed himself, with care, of the nature of the government, and its general and particular laws: this knowledge being once acquired, he had an exact insight into the morals, the virtues and vices of the nation; he imparted to me his conjectures; and the examination we made afterwards, as we studied the inhabitants, always confirmed his first judgment. I had the misfortune to lose this excellent father at the age of twenty; my mother had long been dead; I had three brothers; we had always lived together in the greatest harmony, we were averse to separate, and it was determined among us, that we should continue our travels for two years longer, and then return to our father's country. We had frequently heard of the magnificence of Aaron Raschid's court; and curiosity led us to Bagdat. Being arrived in that superb city, we made acquaintance with some Europeans of our own age; and we all lived together in the same house. My brothers possessed many agreeable talents, and played upon several instruments; some of our companions had the same taste; and, as we could not enjoy at Bagdat the free exercise of our religion, we agreed to meet together in a room upon every festival, to chant divine service. Some chanted the psalms, others played on various instruments, and the whole formed a very  
loud

loud concert. The room lay towards the street, the people stopped as they went by to hear us; the tendency of these proceedings was quickly discovered; Mahometan intolerance took the alarm; and an edict was obtained from the caliph, which was published throughout the city, and which forbade all Christians, under pain of death, to assemble for the purpose of chanting their prayers; leaving, however, to every one the liberty of reciting them in music, if the chant made part of their religious rites; but allowing such permission individually only, proscribing, without exception, every meeting, were it composed of but two or three persons. This prohibition disgusted me to such a degree, that my whole thoughts were employed upon the means of eluding it. I had a strong mechanical turn; and, after some reflection, I conceived the idea of contriving an instrument, which would imitate those already known, and even the human voice. At the same time, I wanted it to produce a sound that resembled a concert of various tones. I applied myself night and day, and, in less than six months, formed an instrument of enormous bulk, which I named an organ, and which perfectly answered my intention. I then placed it near my window, and regularly played upon it, morning and evening, while I chanted the psalms for the day. The caliph was soon informed, that, notwithstanding the rigour of his prohibition, the Christians again performed their religious concerts, and with more clamour than ever. The caliph issued orders in consequence; and one morning, as I was playing on my organ at my usual hour, a loud knocking was heard at the door. I shut the organ, and arose and opened the

the door; a band of armed men, sent by the caliph, entered my chamber, and testified the greatest marks of astonishment at finding me alone. The chief of the band asked me, what was become of my accomplices. I replied, I had none. He paid no regard to this reply, and made unavailing search after the other musicians, in every room in the house; he passed by the organ many times, without having the smallest idea that it was an instrument of music; for I had constructed it in the form of a bureau. At last, not being able to comprehend how my companions could have made their escape, he ordered me to accompany him; I asked to be brought into the presence of the caliph; he replied, he would conduct me thither. The prince was desirous to examine me himself. He received me with a severe and gloomy air, and surveyed me for some time in silence; and, being struck with the serenity of my countenance, ‘Young madman,’ said he, ‘what could have inspired you with such boldness and such contempt of life?’—‘Seignior,’ replied I, ‘nothing encourages innocence so much as the aspect of an equitable judge.’—‘But,’ returned he, ‘thou canst not deny thy disobedience; I myself have been under thy window; I myself heard the noise of instruments and voices; and yet thou wert found alone in thy chamber. What became of thy companions?’—‘I had none.’—‘Hear me: thy appearance pleases and interests me, and thy youth excites my compassion. I can pardon thee; but I insist upon a frank confession.’—‘No, Seignior, you would surely not pardon one who could be base enough to inform against his friends.’—‘Well,’ cried the caliph with anger, ‘every  
Christian

Christian in Bagdat shall this day be thrown into prison.'—'They will remain there at most but a few hours,' replied I, with the utmost tranquillity.—'And who will deliver them?'—'Myself, Seignior.'—At this reply the caliph was mute with astonishment, not knowing whether he should pronounce sentence against me, or dismiss me as a man out of his senses. I resumed, however, my discourse: 'Seignior,' said I, 'I can venture to protest to you, that I have not disobeyed your orders; that I was alone; and this I can easily demonstrate, if you will deign to send for the bureau which is in my chamber. Before you, will I open this mysterious piece of furniture; and you will find therein positive proof of my innocence. The caliph, whose surprise was still more increased, immediately commanded what I had solicited, to be done; and my organ was brought into his apartment. While I was putting it in order, the caliph, who waited with equal curiosity and impatience the *denouement* of this singular scene, repaired to the princess Abassia, his sister; he gave her an account of our interview, and returned with her in his hand. This princess, wearing a long veil, which concealed both her face and shape, sat down upon the floor, beside her brother, not far from the organ, and directly opposite to it. I then asked the caliph's permission to sit before my instrument; and at the same moment I began to sing and play. As soon as the caliph heard the powerful and harmonious tones, which imitated in such perfection the sound of flutes, horns, hautbois, and the human voice, he arose with transport; 'Is it possible,' cried he, 'that this piece of furniture can be a musical instrument?'

'Yes,'



‘Yes,’ Seignior,’ replied I, ‘and I invented it to mitigate the severity of your prohibition.’—‘In proscribing the meetings,’ said the caliph, ‘my only aim was to repress the splendour and solemnity which your ceremonies received from the union of various voices, and different instruments of music. I had not foreseen this marvellous expedient for annulling my edict; but it is just,’ added he, ‘that such as are forced to obey, should have more ingenuity than those who command.’ On saying this, he turned towards Abassa, to ask her what she thought of this adventure.—I then heard the most charming and gentle voice which had ever struck my ear, request him, in terms which were highly flattering to me, to reward the inventor of so extraordinary a discovery. The caliph drew near me: ‘Young man,’ said he, ‘I admire talents, I am fond of the arts, and thy person pleases me; I am desirous of having an explanation of the mechanism of this wonderful machine; and I will take care to make your fortune: thus,’ continued he, in addressing himself to his sister, ‘will you be satisfied, Abassa; for I retain both the instrument and the inventor?’—On that very day was I installed in the palace; a splendid suite of apartments was allotted me; I had many slaves to attend me, and received magnificent presents. I had no fortune, and was delighted to have made one in so rapid and singular a manner; but I was not less struck with the despotism which the prince blended even with the most distinguished of his favours; for he had disposed of me as a slave, without consulting me, and without condescending to inquire whether any particular engagement formed any obstacle to his desire of attaching me to him;

him. I made many reflections upon this subject, which impressed me with melancholy sensations; but I was young, without experience, and was dazzled at the great qualities of the prince, who indeed possesses many in a very eminent degree (21). I shook off all thoughts of the terrible consequences of his despotism, and entirely gave myself up to the hopes which ambition and fortune created. On the next day, the caliph sent for me to explain the mechanism of the organ. In this demonstration, I perceived, in the course of a few minutes, that he was deficient in the knowledge which was necessary to give him an insight into the nature of complicated mechanism; and, at the same time, that his self-love induced him to endeavour to conceal his ignorance. As he had much sense and intelligence, I should have been able, on giving him some idea of first principles, to have demonstrated what he was solicitous to know: but he would have a learned explication; he feigned to understand, what was impossible for him to comprehend; and my demonstration was absolutely useless to him: all he derived from it was, the secret persuasion that he had given me a high idea of his knowledge; and I was mortified at observing how far the puerility and pride of the most enlightened man may be carried, when he has been corrupted by custom and the use of unbounded power. He disposed, however, of my organ in a manner which highly gratified me. The ambassadors of Charlemagne were then at his court; and the caliph included the instrument in the number of the presents with which he charged them for their master.

master (22).” At this part of Barmecide’s narrative, Ifambard observed it was past ten o’clock; they agreed to meet again the next day, at the same hour, and to dedicate the whole evening to the rest of a story, which the friendship and celebrity of Barmecide rendered so interesting.

## CHAPTER XV.

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*THE FRIENDSHIP OF A DESPOT.*

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Toujours son amitié traîne un long esclavage.

RACINE.

ON the following evening Theobald retired at seven o'clock. The three knights repaired to Barmecide's chamber, who thus went on with his story: "My favour with the caliph increased every hour; that prince was extremely fond of reading; one day when he wished to read with me an excellent moral work upon the duties of man, he arose from his seat in order to shut himself up in his cabinet, 'What are you about,' Seignior! said I, 'Ah! rather open all the doors, an useful lecture is a benefit which a prince ought not to withhold from his subjects' (23). 'Barmecide,' replied he, 'it is dangerous to teach the multitude to reason, it will lessen their obedience.' 'Your friend, seignior,' returned I 'your hero, Charlemagne, does not think in that manner. You know with what zeal he endeavours to propagate knowledge.' 'His magnanimity leads him astray,' said Aaron, interrupting him. 'Hear me,' continued he, 'dost thou imagine it is to be wished that animals, which bend patiently to our yoke, should be endowed with understanding and intelligence? Thinkest thou it would be  
advan-



advantageous to mankind that camels and elephants, whose prodigious strength is so subservient to our wants and pleasures, should be able to reflect and reason?"— The dark depth of this discourse, which contained all the policy of despotism, chilled me with dread; I at length learned to know in what estimation a sovereign despot holds the people he governs. This barbarous egotism excited my horror, and I secretly determined to abandon the court of a prince I could no longer esteem, as soon as I found an occasion to escape without danger, for I had no hopes of obtaining permission to retire. Flight could alone rid me of the slavery of his favour, or the danger of his displeasure. Would to heaven I had persevered in my design! But an attraction more powerful than ambition, soon fixed my establishment at this tempestuous court. The caliph was passionately fond of the princess his sister; it had been his custom to pass all his time which he could spare from public affairs, in her company; but since I had been received into such favour, his visits became less frequent, our particular interviews having engrossed the greater part of his leisure; the severe manners of the east did not allow my admittance as a third person to their conversations. The caliph himself had been guilty of great irregularity, in having brought her into the apartment in which I was, on the day I exhibited my organ; he imagined he could, without any serious consequence, infringe upon this sacred custom for once only, in consideration of so extraordinary a circumstance; but nothing could have engaged him to repeat it. He complained of this to me frequently;

frequently; he lamented that he could not bring two people together whose society was so agreeable to him. This prince had too much understanding and knowledge, not to feel the absurdity of this custom; but, like all other tyrants, he was solicitous not to make innovations, unless his passions or his interest prevailed over all political motives. He despised prejudices, yet believing them useful to his authority, he affected to respect them, and neglected nothing that tended to render them venerable in the eyes of the multitude. He was continually speaking to me of his sister; he praised her beauty, her understanding, and her sensibility of disposition. These conversations did not fail to interest me, and gratitude soon increased both the gratification and the danger of them. One day he sent for me much earlier than usual, 'Barmecide,' said he, 'the vizier died suddenly last night, I have consulted Abassa this morning upon the choice of a successor, and at the same time named such as might have pretensions to the office; she excluded them all, and told me that the friend of Aaron appeared to her the only person who ought to be nominated; thus Barmecide, it is you she has named.' 'I, seignior!' cried I.—'Yes, yourself,' replied the caliph, 'and I adopt her recommendation. I am aware, that your youth will make my choice appear extraordinary, but it will give the greater splendour to it; on perceiving what I have done for you, every one will give you credit for the qualifications which could justify such favour.'—'I am not worthy of it,' returned I, 'no seignior, I have neither the requisite talents nor experience.' 'Barmecide,' interrupted the caliph in a  
com-

commanding tone, 'when I judge you capable, such diffidence is not allowable.'—'But, seignior, my religion!'—'I do not require you to abjure it; all public worship is prohibited you, and that is all I prescribe; besides, being henceforward confined to the inside of this palace, you will be less than ever exposed to the inspection of the people; all they will know of you, will be your labours, and they will not concern themselves about your belief. In a word, I repeat to you, that my choice and inclination will justify every thing in the eyes of the public.'

"After a conversation of this kind, it was necessary to consent to the will of a prince whose favours were as difficult to be refused, as was his vengeance to be avoided; and thus was it, that at the age of twenty-two, I found myself prime minister of a vast empire. The caliph, who had already extended his goodness to my brothers, now loaded them with favours. He did not confer any public office upon them, but he was desirous that the brothers of the vizier should live in great opulence. They made a worthy use of their fortune, all their economy was confined to personal expenses; their magnificence appeared only in their gifts, and their alms. I thought as they did, the treasures I possessed from the liberality of the caliph I distributed among men of letters, artists, and the unfortunate; and, in a short time, the Barmecides became celebrated, and dear to the nation. I was soon sensible of all the weight of the burden I had taken upon me. The caliph, as is generally the case with absolute sovereigns, was neither fond of labour, nor public affairs; he did not extend his views beyond the limits  
of

of his own reign, and ever certain of obtaining by an edict whatever money he wished for, he cared but little for the state of his finances; I found them in wretched decay, and my principal care was to retrieve them, to ease the burden of the people, and to maintain strict justice in all the tribunals. The most happy success, and the approbation of the public, rewarded my toils. The people alone are the real dispensers of glory; the enthusiasm of their gratitude imparts a charm which captivates and transports a generous mind. To them I affectionately attached myself, and this attachment proved the inexhaustible source of pain and unavailing regret. I could not enjoy the felicity I rendered the nation, when I considered that no inviolable law, no stable form of government, secured the solidity of it; when, in fine, I considered, that either the death of Aaron, or my own, would in a moment destroy all my work. I sometimes endeavoured, but in vain, to inspire the caliph with a solicitude which appeared to me so natural; his ~~heart~~, corrupted by pride, could neither participate, nor even conceive it. One day as he appeared affected at the homage the people had paid him; ‘tender-hearted people,’ cried I, ‘what would become of you if Aaron no longer existed!’—At these words I saw joy sparkle in the caliph’s eye. ‘Yes, yes,’ said he, ‘then would they feel the proper value of all I am doing for them.’—‘But, feignior,’ returned I, ‘if your successor should abuse the absolute power, which in your hands is so worthily employed!—if these people, whom you love, should groan under oppression?’—‘They will regret me the  
more



more keenly,' replied the caliph. This horrid expression stopped my mouth, it destroyed the feeble hopes I had encouraged, and I murmured at fate, which chained me in the court of this inflexible despot, instead of having placed me under such a prince as Charlemagne.

“Two years, however, elapsed, since the period in which I was invested with the office of vizier; but unremitting toils of application, and a growing melancholy at length undermined my health, and endangered my life; the caliph manifested on this occasion all the anxious disquietude of friendship; this prince was fond of whatever was agreeable or necessary to him; to contribute to his amusement, or be useful to him, were the sole means of securing his attachment; he would then be capable of the most amiable procedure and attentions. He placed so much value upon his affection, that he thought it could alone entitle the person who was the object of it to his familiarity, and at the same time, that it ought to inspire unbounded devotedness in return; I was but too well assured, that pride and personal interest were the first springs, and the sole basis of his conduct and sentiments; yet his kindness for me was so constant, that it was impossible not to be affected at it; I loved him, and not being able to deceive myself respecting what he was, I often delighted to consider what he might have been with another education, and in a different condition of life; I then saw him the man, whom I should have chosen for my most intimate friend; for nature had lavished upon him every thing that could  
interest

interest and persuade; he had corrupted the gifts of nature to such a degree, that with extensive knowledge, a superiour understanding, and gracefulness of address, he was yet unamiable, even in the intercourse of intimacy. He referred every thing to himself, spoke only of himself; his friend was condemned to act the eternal part of confidant and admirer; his private conversations had never any charm for me, except when he talked of the princess, his sister, and of her he was continually speaking. I listened, for a long while, with pleasure, to the praises he gave her; afterwards this conversation impressed me with certain painful sensations, which I was unable to define, and which at the same time became still more engaging; I always was ready to favour its introduction, or to prolong its duration. I had been much affected at the manner in which the princess had recommended me to the office of vizier; and I ascribed to gratitude the extreme interest she inspired me with. Since that period, the caliph frequently mentioned that she spoke of me; she was proud, he said, of my successes and conduct. These discourses sunk deep into my memory, they were incessantly renewed; I still recollected the sweet sound of the voice I had heard the day I was in the same apartment with her; I considered, with pleasure, that after the caliph, I was the only man in the world she had ever beheld; I ventured to believe she had preserved the memory of that incident; the proofs of attention and esteem, which she had since given me, confirmed that idea; in fine, I represented her to my fancy in all the

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charms

charms with which the caliph had depicted her; and Abassa soon became the object of all my reveries. Whenever I was able to undeceive myself respecting the sensations I felt, I deplored, with bitterness, a folly of so strange a nature; my melancholy increased by these reflections, and then it was that the decline of my health gave the caliph so much concern and pain. The physicians of the court were consulted, and they declared their opinion that my case was mortal; however, I still continued my labours, and attended as usual, at the appointed hours, upon the caliph; for in the commerce of princes, the best loved courtier is the most enslaved; methodical in friendship, because they cannot feel that dear and easy independency which constitutes the charms of intimate connexion, they command their rendezvous, they have their hours of confidence and effusion of heart, as invariably fixed as their hours of audience."

When Barmecide was at this part of his narrative, a knocking was heard at the chamber door. Ifambard arose, and opening it, readily pardoned the interruption, when he saw Lancelot enter, who informed them, that having been a month at the court of Beatrice, that princess had this day charged him with an important commission for Theobald. Lancelot added, that he had arrived at the moment in which the old man was retiring to rest, and that, after having delivered his commission, knowing his friends were in the castle, he could not resist the inclination he felt to embrace them before he went away. Ifambard asked Lancelot many questions relative to the court  
of

of Beatrice. "You will find there," said Lancelot, "several French knights; Angilbert, young Roger, Archambald, and some others; you will likewise see Oger the Dane, who is but lately arrived." At these words, Ifambard began to laugh, on recollecting the cottage of Oger, and his story. "We have still a warrior," resumed Lancelot, "who might be named in the number of the French, on account of his attachment to Charlemagne; it is Grimaldo, duke of Beneventum. Although the brother-in-law of Adalgise \*, and a prince, yet he is grateful. Formerly a hostage at the court of France, and owing to the generosity of the emperor both his education and his dominions, he feels, as he ought, the value of such uncommon favours; and far from uniting with the enemies of Charlemagne, he has hitherto ever fought against them (24). You will find some other princes on our side, Theudon, king of Pannonia, and the four sons of duke Aimon" (25).

After these particulars respecting the warriors, they spoke of the duchess, and the ladies of the court. Lancelot launched out in the praise of Beatrice in such a manner, that the three knights judged he was in love with her. "I do not possess so much temerity," replied Lancelot: "the insensibility of which she had given so much proof, and which has assembled us all about her, is a preservative from the danger of her charms; among us, hitherto, the king of Pannonia

\* As well as Tassillon, duke of Bavaria; he had married a daughter of Didier.



only has ventured to declare himself her lover, for kings have no doubt of any thing; I suspect, besides, that the last of the four sons of Aimon, the youthful Guichard, loves her in secret; but he is so timid, that the war, whatever its duration may be, will certainly be over before he will venture to make known his love. For my own part, I have declared myself the knight of the young and charming Delia, the favourite of Beatrice; with a countenance expressive of the tenderest sensibility, and enchanting sweetness of manners, she has a heart as inaccessible to love as that of Beatrice; I have many rivals, and we are all treated with like indifference. The other young ladies, attached to the duchess, are all distinguished by the gracefulness of their persons, and the cultivation of their minds. But you will meet there a lady renowned for her beauty, her virtue, and the glory of having withstood the passion of the greatest prince upon earth."——"What!" cried Isambard, "is Amalberga at the palace of Beatrice?" "She has taken the surest measure," replied Lancelot, "that of fleeing from court; but if, as it is believed, she secretly love the emperor, how will she be able to forget him? the fame of that hero pursues her every where" (26). Oliver likewise asked several questions relative to the confederate princes. "I have been twice in their camp," answered Lancelot, "they are much superior in numbers to us, and have many chiefs among them very formidable for their talents and valour. Among others, Gerold, and the duke of Spoleto, and two more princes, passionate admirers of  
of

of Beatrice, Henry, duke of Friuli, and the ambitious Hartrad, count of Thuringia; they also expect Constantine, prince of Greece, and son of the famous Irene" (27). After all these explanations, Lancelot assured the two friends, that Beatrice, being informed of their arrival, expected them with impatience; they promised to join her standard the day after the morrow, and Lancelot took his leave, and returned the same evening.

## CHAPTER XVI.

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*THE GOLDEN HERB.*

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———— All blest secrets,  
 All you unpublished virtues of the earth,  
 Spring with my tears ; be aidant and remediate  
 In the good man's distrefs.

*King Lear.* SHAKSPEARE.

LANCELOT'S visit having taken up the remaining part of the evening, Barmecide promised to finish his story the next day, and he then resumed it in the following terms.

“ I was in the declining state of health I have described, and, as I have already said, still attended upon Aaron at the accustomed hours. One day, after a long interview, at the moment I was going to take my leave of him, he detained me for a while. ‘ I had liked to forget,’ said he, ‘ a thing, which appears to me so chimerical, that it is hardly worth talking to you about ; but it at least will prove the interest my sister takes in the pain your indisposition occasions me. You must know that Abassia, though born with a good understanding, possesses all the credulity, which perfect innocence, and the education of a seraglio, can create. She has been brought up by an old female slave named Nouraha, and in whom she places all her confidence. Nouraha, knowing the condition you were in, has been consulting, I know not what empiric, who, in her opinion, is a wonderful

ful personage. This man has told her, that there exists upon the summit of a high mountain, in the neighbourhood of Bagdat, a miraculous plant, very difficult to be discovered; which would infallibly cure you. It might indeed be possible, that a plant, the virtues of which are but little-known, might contain some which would prove beneficial in your case; but what entirely destroys my hopes in that respect, is the extravagant description which the empiric makes of this fabulous plant. My sister has given me this description, which I will spare you.'—Here I interrupted the caliph, in order to express the curiosity I felt to hear it; 'Well,' said he, 'since you are determined to amuse yourself with that folly, I am going to read it to you; upon which he read as follows:

'By permission of almighty God, and his divine prophet, there exists upon the top of a mountain eastward of Bagdat, a marvellous plant, named *The Golden Herb*; because it has the power to change the most common metals into gold. It can likewise cure all the ills of man and child by a single touch; but to man it is invisible; a pure and chaste woman has solely the right of breaking it from its stalk without danger; she who has not preserved her innocence will die on endeavouring to pluck it. *The Golden Herb* must be sought for during the calm of the night only, it then shines like a lucid taper, it is only to be found in places planted with cedars (28).'

'You are aware,' said Aaron, 'what credit is due to a physician who recommends such a remedy; yet my sister entertains no doubts of the efficacy of the recipe; in consequence of which, she is desirous that



search should be made after this admirable plant, and she has asked my permission to send old Nouraha this very night to the mountain, attended by Nasuf, the chief of her slaves. I have consented for this night only, finding it impossible to remove her credulity.' After having expressed my gratitude at such affectionate kindness, I quitted the caliph. My heart was so full, that the instant I found myself alone, I could not suppress my tears. A thousand different sensations agitated me at the same moment; after much reflection, and impelled on by a desire which I could not overcome, I sent for Nasuf; I knew that slave; he owed his place to me, and he was intirely at my devotion. He immediately appeared; and after having informed him of what the caliph had told me, I inquired if Nouraha knew him? he replied, that, Nouraha having been always confined to the inmost part of the princess's palace, he had never seen her. I then declared, that I had an odd fancy to examine what steps this slave would take in order to discover the marvellous plant. Nasuf objected, that I could not see her, because she must quit me at the foot of the mountain, no man being allowed to be present at the search after The Golden Herb. I pretended, that I would conceal myself to observe her, and in fine, I asked him to substitute me in his stead; we promised each other inviolable secrecy, and he consented to what I so ardently desired, well persuaded, that Nouraha would always imagine she had been conducted by Nasuf. I waited for night with inexpressible impatience, and, at the appointed hour, being disguised in the garments of Nasuf, I repaired to a little door of the palace  
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which opens towards the country. I gave two raps: some minutes after the door half opened; a female, covered with a long veil, made her appearance; another female, who accompanied her, asked me who I was. I answered in a low voice, *I am Nasuf*; at these words one of them went out, the door was shut to, and we began our walk. My companion trembled and tottered at every step she took; I was more confused than herself, but kept profound silence. We continued for a quarter of an hour to walk along the banks of the Tigris; we then traversed a small wood, at the end of which we discovered the foot of the mountain. My timid companion drew back her arm which she had passed under mine, and made me a sign with her hand to withdraw. I instantly obeyed. The night was clear and bright; I perceived an enormous rock at a small distance from me; I drew that way, and concealed myself behind the rock among the shrubs; I placed myself in such a manner as to be able to observe through the branches the person whose motions inspired me with so much interest.—She stood for some time motionless; I then observed her prepare to lift up her veil. O presentiment of love! the conversation with the caliph made me penetrate what pride and presumption would never have ventured to imagine, but what love should have divined! Yes; I expected to find Abassia substituted in the place of her slave, that Abassia, whose charming countenance I had never beheld;—and, in truth, it was she herself! She lifted up her veil; the moon shed sufficient light to enable me to distinguish her features; I saw her side-face only, but I was not less struck with her transcendent

beauty. I expected indeed to see her, but so wide is the difference between the best founded hope and real certitude, that I felt almost as much surprise as delight on this occasion. She stretched forth her arms towards heaven, and fell down upon her knees: 'Supreme being,' cried she, 'O thou, the sovereign arbiter of our destiny, deign to hear and conduct me! My hands are innocent, my heart is tender, thou knowest it.—If thou wilt have a victim, I devote myself without regret or struggle; take my life, it is useless, but prolong the valuable existence of the benefactor of this empire.'—Scarce had she finished uttering these words, when, impelled by a movement which was impossible to repress, I flew towards her, and threw myself at her feet: she instantly knew me, and drawing back with terror, 'O Barmecide,' cried she, 'to what dreadful peril dost thou venture to expose thyself \*!' On saying this, she hastily let down her veil, and endeavoured to go away; I detained her, and said all the passionate things that love and gratitude could inspire: she replied only with sobs and tears. I held her robe fast, and conjured her to listen to me, but she still made vain efforts to escape. 'Ah, I too plainly see,' said I, 'that compassion only led you here; well, Abassa, if I am not the most happy of men, punish me for having been one of the most daring. Yes, I can venture to adore you. I have ventured to believe that the same sentiments which drew me here, had likewise been your guide. I am now

\* It is well known, that any man, who saw one of the wives or relations of the caliph without a veil, incurred the penalty of death.

fatally undeceived, but having enjoyed but for a few moments only such an error, can I support my existence after it is removed? Forbear, forbear an unavailing search, since I am not loved, for pity at least let me die.' In speaking thus I let go her robe; Abassa continued motionless, and heaving a deep sigh, 'Ungrateful man!' exclaimed she. At this word, so dear to my heart, I seized her trembling hand, and kissed it with rapture! 'O heavens,' said Abassa, all dismayed, 'can I be still worthy to discover the plant which can save thy life?'—Love alone had the power of dispelling the fears of the credulous and tender Abassa: she suffered me to persuade her, that The Golden Herb could not cure a melancholy of which she herself was the real cause; and she now indulged the happiness of expressing, without constraint, the sentiments which had been so long concealed in the inmost recesses of her soul. But soon the dreadful idea of an eternal separation arose to taint the delight of this tender converse; the caliph had allowed, for one night only, the research after The Golden Herb. Abassa, in a few minutes, was going to return to the seraglio, and there to shut up herself for ever. However, we were less unhappy than before this interview had taken place; we had no hopes, it is true, but were both certain of being beloved!—We contrived means of holding correspondence together, not by letter, for that was impossible, but by agreeing to certain signs, which were expressive of assurance of fidelity, of love, and of the desire to meet again; and the caliph himself, without being at all able to suspect it, was to be every day the interpreter of our sentiments.



We were forced to separate two hours before daylight; our farewel was as afflicting as it was tender, and if you have ever loved, you ought to conceive what we felt, when stopping at the door of the feraglio, and obliged to give the signal of our arrival, I saw the fatal door open which was soon to shut upon Abassa, and separate me from her for ever!

“ From that moment love became the predominant sentiment of my heart; the violent agitation it had produced, the endearing occupation it every instant afforded, soon relieved me from the languid condition into which I had been thrown by labour, disquietude, and sorrow. As soon as we are loved, we are never without hope; and however unfortunate it may prove, a mutual affection suffuses an interest over our whole life, which fills up every vacuity, and for which nothing can compensate. Frequently, on an evening, I visited the foot of the mountain where I had seen Abassa, and there wrapped in delicious melancholy, I enjoyed my remembrances, and even my regret!— Every morning I passed under a window of the feraglio; I there contemplated with delight a suspended veil, which, in spite of the prodigious height of the windows, I could distinguish through two iron bars; this was one of the mysterious signals of Abassa; I replied to it by throwing a stone against the wall; and I was certain the noise would express the sentiment I felt, and that love knew how to interpret it. On a certain day of every week, I went upon the Tigris with a numerous band of musicians; I knew that Abassa, from one of the terraces of her palace, was lending an attentive ear to this concert, of which she  
herself

herself was the object. The musicians filled a large bark, as for myself I was alone in a small skiff, or rather, I was with Abassia; I fancied I heard and saw her, and surely I saw her; imagination imparted to me her sentiments during this excursion, which thus created a portion of the delight which a rendezvous affords to a happy lover. I repaired every day to the caliph at the appointed hour, and this visit was now grown extremely interesting to me; Aaron never received me but upon leaving his sister, and I was certain that he would, without his having the least suspicion of it, bear me some dear token of the remembrance of the ingenuous and tender Abassia; at one time, while I was with him, a slave came to offer the caliph, on the part of the princess, a basket filled with flowers; Aaron received the present, but I knew that myself was the sole object of the message. Love still furnished me with purer and dearer gratifications; Abassia had honoured me with the glorious title of *benefactor of the empire*. It was incumbent on me to justify such a title. What delight did this idea blend with my labours! Each beneficent edict was published in the streets, and in the courts of the palace: I dared to indulge the idea, that on hearing these proclamations, Abassia secretly congratulated herself on the choice she had made. She had founded several asylums of hospitality\*: I took delight in augmenting them, in adding to their endowments, and rendering them, by their magnificence and utility, worthy of the name of her who had founded them.

\* We read in the history of the Arabs and Turks, that almost all the princesses and sultanas employed a portion of their treasures to form public establishments of this nature.

“Four months had elapsed since the happy night in which I had seen Abassa. It was now the middle of autumn; one morning the caliph sent for me, and when I entered the palace he came forth to meet me, and taking me by the arm, said he wished to take a little excursion with me. When we were out of the palace, ‘I am going to show you,’ said he, laughing, ‘something very curious, and which has been kept a secret from me, for I only heard of it yesterday evening.’—The manner in which the caliph spoke was sufficient to banish all disquietude; yet observing that he conducted me towards the mountain, I felt a violent emotion; I begged him to explain himself. ‘No,’ replied he, ‘I am desirous you should have the pleasure of being taken by surprise.’ As he said these words, I cast my eyes towards the mountain, and perceived, with great astonishment, a magnificent obelisk, constructed with white marble, erected on the very spot where I had thrown myself at Abassa’s feet; on drawing nearer, I saw beside the rock a large tent open on one side, in which was a single seat. ‘All this,’ said Aaron, ‘is the work of my sister; she wished to immortalize the nocturnal excursion of her Nouraha, for she does not conceive that ever woman could have undertaken a more hardy and perilous enterprise than to wander alone, and unveiled, over that rugged mountain. Abassa has caused this obelisk to be framed, together with this hospitable tent for the weary traveller, or for such as come in quest of *The Golden Herb*; and a multitude of workmen, by her orders, have last night erected these glorious monuments of the courage of Nouraha.’ After this explication, which touched

touched me to the soul, I remarked a long inscription upon the obelisk; I was drawing nearer to it, but the caliph holding me; 'Before you read this inscription,' said he, 'I must communicate some trifling particulars, of which I did not inform you at the time, because they could only interest Abassâ from whom I received them. You must know then, that Nouraha, doubtlessly to make a merit of it, gave her a pompous account of her wanderings over the mountain; Nouraha pretended, that she saw The Golden Herb glitter, but at the moment she endeavoured to pluck it, the wonderful plant suddenly disappeared; in fine, Nouraha, after a moment of sanguine delight, quitted the mountain in the deepest sorrow; she stopped near the rock, and there she wept; the inscription gives, in a figurative style, an account of these different occurrences; now you will be able to understand it; read, and remember that it is Nouraha who speaks.'—At these words I drew near the obelisk, and read some Arabic verses, of which the following is a literal translation.

'I came heré the fifteenth of the moon of saphar, guided by the purest of all sentiments. My happiness at first surpassed my expectation; my eyes contemplated what I dared not hope to see! transported with delight, I then knew that the supreme good was no chimera! But this enchantment endured only an instant, it is passed away, and leaves me an eternal regret, an indelible remembrance! O thou, who art drawn here by a similar sentiment, repose in that asylum, and in thy vows forget not her who has prepared it for thee.'

"I experienced such emotion on perusing this ingenuous



genuous and touching inscription, that the excess of my confusion might have betrayed me, had the caliph observed it; but so far was he from suspecting the truth, that the condition I was in wholly escaped his notice. He remarked only that the name of Nouraha had been forgotten upon the obelisk, and that but one seat was to be found in the tent, circumstances which he imputed entirely to the negligence of the workmen.

“ On that very evening, however, I told the caliph, that having reflected on the importance which the princess attached to the enterprize of Nouraha, and that act having been performed with a view of restoring me to health, I considered it was my own duty to celebrate it likewise; Aaron replied that it would prove a certain means of paying my court to his sister. Thus authorised by the caliph, I sent in quest of artists who should pass the night in forming, under my own inspection, the plan of a superb temple, upon the front of which I wrote these words, *To Gratitude*. On the following day, attended by a numerous suite, I went to the foot of the mountain, and laid myself the first stone of the edifice. I then repaired to the caliph, I put the plan of this monument into his hands, entreating him to lay it before the princess. This answer was not so expressive as the letter she had written me upon the obelisk; I could impart a single sentiment only, and she had been able to express all she felt; but at least I endeavoured, that the temple I was consecrating to her should become one of the noblest monuments of the capital of that great empire. This temple was immensely large; its inside was covered with yellow-antique, and decorated with columns  
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of amethyst. On entering, the object that first struck the sight was a statue of white marble, representing a woman concealed under a veil, and placed upon a magnificent pedestal ornamented with gilt bronze: at the foot of the statue stood an altar, upon which a perfume continually ascended from an alabaster vase, and formed an odorous and mysterious cloud, which reached to the height of the statue; this was the sacred fire, which I caused to be fed night and day with religious attention: between the columns were placed capacious vases of porphyry, filled with flowers. Availing myself of the streams which issued from the rocky part of the mountain, I constructed various fountains within the temple. This edifice had six grand entrances, the folding doors of which were shut in the night only, and were concealed in the thickness of the walls, while the sun illumined the horizon; but six light sheets of limpid water, falling from the top of these entrances, formed, during the day, six transparent blinds, which, by touching a single spring, were lowered or stopped at pleasure. These brilliant curtains preserved a delicious coolness through the whole edifice; moreover, being persuaded that all magnificence, whatever might be the motive, is only vain ornament, when it contributes not to public utility; and thinking besides, that a beneficent institution would prove a homage most worthy of Abassa, I placed in the peristyle of the temple a kind of box, upon which was read an inscription to the following purport:

‘ If any unfortunate and oppressed people be yet to be found, in the dominions of the most just and generous

generous of princes, let them here deposit their grievances. Their complaints shall be read every day, and their ills redressed. For Barmecide is desirous, that henceforward all they, who come to the foot of this mountain, shall be led thither by hope, and find happiness there.'

"The last lines of this inscription retraced my own adventure; I flattered myself that Abassa would comprehend my meaning; in fact, she did not misunderstand me, the caliph having observed, that she read the last sentence with tender approbation. In order to render this spot celebrated, I instituted a public festival for the people, on the anniversary of *the research of the golden herb*; it was celebrated each returning year, to the very period of my flight, in memory of the event it consecrated; it did not begin till night, and was not over till three hours before day break. The caliph was not at all astonished at what I had done in this respect; he knew that by choice I led a simple and even frugal life, but that I displayed the utmost magnificence in all works of beneficence and public utility. It appeared besides to him exceedingly natural, that knowing, as I did, better than any one, his extreme tendernefs for Abassa, and the extraordinary ascendancy that young princess had over his mind, I should have availed myself with eagerness of this favourable occasion of rendering a splendid homage to the sister of my sovereign and benefactor. There is, indeed, no danger that princes should ever be surpris'd at what is done for them; the most passionate attachment, and the grossest flattery, cannot produce an eta of devotedness or magnificence sufficient to astonish them. Notwithstanding

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ing the prodigious number of artists and workmen which I employed in the construction of my temple, the work at the end of five months was not yet finished; at that period a war broke out; I had for two years past exerted my anxious endeavours to prolong peace, which is so necessary to public welfare; but when I found that war was necessary, I was desirous to declare it; I had a double motive for courting glory, since it appeared to me that glory alone could reconcile me to the frightful distance which would separate me from Abassa. A little while previous to my entering into the ministry, I had made a single campaign in the late war under the eyes of the caliph; this prince, justly renowned for his military talents, had judged of mine in so favourable a way, that he would then have raised me to the first rank had not the enemy accepted a peace on the caliph's own conditions. Encouraged by this remembrance, and knowing that the caliph would not take the field during the first campaign, I ventured to ask for the command of the army, and I obtained it. This campaign lasted three months, and was crowned with a continual succession of victory and triumph, and what constituted its greatest glory, it was followed by a peace. The caliph had himself been too much accustomed to successes of this nature, to be envious of them in another; he was on the contrary highly flattered, that a young man of twenty-five only, of whom he had made choice in preference to so many veterans, should have achieved so splendid an expedition. My entry into Bagdat was triumphant. The people in crowds ran to meet me, and escorted me to the gates of the palace; the shouts of joy of that  
generous



generous people inebriated me with delight; a delight so much the more delicious to me, as it was impossible that Abassa did not hear their acclamations. O, how I loved that people who afforded me so sweet a triumph, that people whose gratitude will for ever illustrate the name of Barmecide!—The praises of poets immortalise their own talents alone; the favours of sovereigns bestow only an artificial grandeur which vanishes away at their displeasure, but the acclamation of the people constitutes real renown. As I was proceeding up the first flight of steps which led to the palace, I perceived the caliph on the top of them. He held a wreath of laurel in his hand, and came down to meet me. When I came near him, I stopped, and, agreeably to the oriental custom, I bent one knee to the ground. ‘That,’ said he, observing my attitude, ‘is a homage rendered to birth, here is one to heroism;’ on saying these words he placed upon my head the wreath of laurel. The people applauded this act with inexpressible transport, the caliph lifted me up, and taking me under the arm, led me into the palace. When we were together in his cabinet, ‘Barmecide,’ said he, ‘in you I have just been crowning valour and military talents; but innocence and sensibility will likewise present a well earned tribute to him whose exploits have given peace to the empire; receive this olive wreath, formed by the hands of Abassa; she has charged me to present it to the *heroic pacificator*.’ At these words I prostrated myself, and seizing the caliph’s hand, I watered it with tears!—He was himself much affected; we remained mute for a few moments, when the caliph resuming his discourse, ‘Go,’ said he, ‘and take  
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some repose, return here to-morrow at the same hour.—  
To-morrow!—Barmecide, you shall be sensible of all the esteem and friendship I have for you.' These last words he uttered with a tenderness which penetrated my very soul; not daring to ask him any questions, I withdrew, as he had ordered, but in a condition utterly impossible to describe. Intoxicated with glory and felicity, I passed the whole night in reflecting upon the last words of the caliph, upon his emotion, and on the invaluable wreath of olive conferred upon me.—He was to give me the greatest proof of *esteem and friendship*!—I was invested with the most eminent employment, I enjoyed an immense fortune from his bounty; what farther could he have to bestow?—My heart dared to anticipate it, and in vain my reason combated the idea: a thousand remembrances, a thousand circumstances I recollected, confirmed me in the dearest and most daring hope: at length, I had no doubt but that the caliph intended to give me the hand of Abassa. This idea inspired me with unbounded gratitude; I severely condemned myself for the opinion I had hitherto entertained of his disposition; I taxed myself with injustice and unthankfulness; I could no longer conceive how I could have thus judged of a prince, who appeared to me the most perfect model of a friend and sovereign. I framed excuses for every thing that had shocked me in his conduct; I was sensible only of his great qualities and the favours he had conferred. In a word, he became as dear to me as my love itself; O were princes but aware of all the advantage they might derive from those they govern; did they know to what pitch of enthusiasm and idolatry they might lead

lead them, they would perhaps set a higher value upon this kind of domination !

“ You may easily imagine the ardent impatience with which I expected the hour of rendezvous which the caliph had appointed me. It was impossible not to be there before the time ; he was not at all surpris'd at this, and making me sit down by him, he held the following discourse. ‘ You have rendered me eminent services ; your cares and your labours have relieved me from the weight of public affairs ; your converse has made me taste the sweets of social intercourse ; disgusted by repetition, fatigued by the dissipation of noisy and tumultuous amusements, grown callous to pleasure and even to glory, friendship is become necessary to my happiness ; I love but yourself and my sister, and, as you are sensible, I have long lamented that I could not receive at the same time, two persons I held so dear. Abassia can only appear before me or her husband ; I offer you her hand, Barmecide, but on a condition which doubtlessly will seem severe to you.’— Here the caliph paused ; I was so violently affected that I was fearful of betraying what I felt by my reply ; I had taken a resolution before hand to restrain my transports, and to express only a respectful gratitude ; I therefore bowed, and casting down my eyes, kept silence. Aaron resuming his discourse ; ‘ I am going to open my heart to you,’ said he, ‘ Abassia appears to me a person of such high accomplishments, that, were she not my sister, marriage would have united us together ; but since the most amiable and most beautiful woman in the east cannot become the wife of Aaron, no other has a right to possess her ; besides, I ought

ought not to suffer, that the blood of Ali should be contaminated by a foreign alliance, and you must be aware that the nephews of your brothers cannot be mine \* (29). Thus I give my friend the hand of my sister, but I cannot allow him to assume the rights of a husband; on the contrary, I require his most sacred promise, that he will never be more to Abassa, than I myself am—a friend and a brother; and on this condition only, can I allow such an union. Speak Barmecide, do you promise me this?—To this question it was necessary to make some reply; struck with astonishment and stung with indignation, yet transported at the idea that I should see Abassa every day, and that in spite of a tyrant's caprice she would be mine; I experienced as much emotion as indignation and surprise; as much delight as anger, but I dissembled all which passed within me. I promised every thing; the caliph exacted terrible oaths, and I made them: he then told me he had obtained the consent of the princess, and that our nuptials should be solemnized on the following day, in the most magnificent manner. He concluded by declaring, that Abassa entirely approved his pleasure, but that, notwithstanding his reliance on my word, I should never see the princess but in his presence, and that he should watch me with equal severity and vigilance. I replied very coolly, that being wholly addicted to public business, love never led my reason astray, that I considered that passion as weakness, and could screen myself from it without difficulty. After

\* All this discourse of the caliph is taken from history. See note 29, at the end of the volume.



this protestation I retired in a state of mind I will not attempt to describe, but which you will easily conceive. —But influenced by one sole idea, I ceased to hate the caliph's tyranny, on reflecting, that in a few hours Abassa would publicly pronounce the vow that would for ever unite us together. The temple I had erected was at length finished; and the morrow, the day appointed for our nuptials, was likewise that of the festival of the temple. As soon as the dawn appeared, I put on the magnificent garments the caliph had given me, and I sent the gifts to the seraglio, which custom required me to present to the princess; at eight o'clock I received an order to repair to the mosque, and scarcely had I entered, when the princess arrived. She was veiled, conducted by the caliph, and surrounded by all her slaves; she did not unveil herself, and after the ceremony was over, the caliph took her by the hand, and told me to follow him to the temple at the foot of the mountain, adding that, as the festival of the people did not begin till night, we should pass the day there. Being arrived at the temple, the slaves formed a circle around it, that no man might come near. The caliph, the princess, and myself, entered the temple; I was seized with a violent fluttering at the heart, and I equally desired and dreaded the instant, in which Abassa would take off her veil, the instant in which I should behold, in the face of day, that adored countenance. I judged of her distress by my own. I easily conceived what she must have felt on finding herself at the foot of the mountain, and in the temple of which she was the divinity, and I had no idea of being able to bear her first look, or that so much love

and so much confusion would escape the piercing eyes of Aaron. At length being arrived at the extremity of the temple, the caliph said, turning towards his sister: 'Come, my dear Abassa, now lift up your veil.' At these words, the princess made no reply, and remained motionless; the caliph resumed his discourse: 'I conceive,' said he, 'all your embarrassment, and how strange it must appear to you to show yourself unveiled; but the more you hesitate the more will that timidity grow upon you; it must, however, be surmounted; Barmecide is your husband, and remember, that he has only received your hand to procure me the happiness of seeing both at the same time, and in order to rid you of that troublesome veil.' On speaking this, Aaron, observing that Abassa had not the resolution to obey him, drew near her to lift up her veil; at this she started, and still made resistance to the caliph's will: but the veil was at last removed, and Abassa decked in all the gifts of nature, and all the grace of youth and bashfulness; appeared before me! The modest suffusion of her countenance, her beautiful down-cast eyes, her long eye-lashes humid with tears, the ebon hue of which still added new charms to the vivid carnation of her cheek; the sweetness of her mien, her bloom, the majesty of her stature; every thing, even the immobility of her look, displayed her whole person to such advantage, that the caliph himself was too much struck with it to have leisure to observe the impression it made upon me. But while we were gazing with much attention, we observed Abassa suddenly turn pale; her head hung down upon her bosom, she gave her hand to her brother, and fell into his arms in a swoon. The

caliph commanded me to go out, and send the princess's slaves to him. I obeyed; and dismayed, beside myself, a prey to the most excruciating anxiety, I retired to the tent to await the caliph's call; I was terribly alarmed lest this fainting should have given the prince some suspicions; but after half an hour's suspense he came and removed all my apprehensions: 'This scene must have alarmed you,' said he, 'and, indeed, an European cannot but be surprised at it; as for myself, I expected something similar would happen; such is the force of custom, and you have seen what a struggle it costs the brightest beauty of the east to remove the veil which hid her charms from the gaze of mankind. Abassa, however, has recovered the use of her senses, she declares she can now get over her timidity, and consents to see you again. Come, let us join her; but do not look at her, or speak of what has passed.' On saying this, the caliph took me under the arm, and we returned to the temple. The princess, on perceiving us, sent away her slaves; Aaron made us sit down, and placed himself between us, so that I could hardly have a glimpse of Abassa, but I never caught her looks during the whole day, for her eyes were always cast on the ground. In other respects she took a part in the conversation, and on several occasions uttered the most affectionate things, which could only be understood by myself, and the true meaning of which it was impossible for the caliph to divine. We dined in the temple, and the caliph seated himself at table between the princess and me. After dinner, Aaron proposed a walk upon the mountain. Abassa resumed her veil; from that moment, she conversed with more ease and freedom, she

she often addressed her discourse to me; at the decline of the day, we returned to the temple, and waited there till the hour in which the people were to repair thither to celebrate the festival; then the caliph took Abassa by the hand and went out; I had caused the mountain to be illuminated, and had placed a band of musicians behind the rocks. The caliph and the princess stayed more than half an hour, to enjoy the spectacle and listen to the music; they then quitted me to return to the palace. This, indeed, was a dreadful moment. Notwithstanding the constraint which the most capricious tyranny had imposed upon me, the day which had just passed away had been the brightest of my whole existence; for how could I be otherwise than happy on seeing her I adored, and whose face and mien were attended with all the interest of novelty, as well as on considering that a sacred tie united us, and that at least I should never have the affliction to see another make pretensions to her hand? But on leaving me, she carried with her all the sweet enchantment which her presence had created; I found myself all alone, felicity appeared nothing more than a vain illusion, and the dear name of husband a cruel imposture, which far from satisfying my love, could only irritate and drive it to desperation. Too much agitated to take repose, I passed almost the whole night in a retired part of the mountain; there sorrowfully sitting upon the crag of a rock, I indulged the most painful reflections; I heard from afar the cries of the people, whose unconstrained and genuine joy is always obstreperous. I experienced some consolation on considering that this people in the midst of their revels were blessing Barmecide; several



times I heard the echo of the mountain repeat my name; and I cried, ‘O, grateful people, it is to you alone that talents should be consecrated; it is you alone that should be served, and not insolent and barbarous despots, who make the most sacred rights of love and nature the sport of their caprice!’—Thus was it that I gave vent to my grief, the bitterness of which was increased by each successive thought; this dark melancholy, however, was almost entirely dispelled, at the appearance of the first rays of morning;—the day which I saw arise, with rapture, announced that in a few hours I should again see Abassa, and I forgot my affliction, and gave myself up to all the charms of such soothing hope. Fearful of betraying too much eagerness, I did not attend upon the caliph a moment before the accustomed hour; I found the princess there, she blushed on seeing me, and kept silence for a while, but recovering herself by degrees, she not only grew bold enough to address her conversation to me, but even to meet my eyes. The first look, so full of sentiment and confusion, produced an inexpressible effect upon my heart.—Ah, what inconceivable charms does bashfulness add to beauty! And what enjoyments, pure as itself, what new delights does it procure to love!—Bashfulness can multiply favours, and give inestimable value both to what it refuses and what it is fearful to grant!—That stolen and timid look rendered me satisfied and happy for the rest of the day. On the morrow, I was passionately desirous, that Abassa should venture to look me in the face; I waited a long while for this favour, and never obtained it without observing her fine eyes fill with tears, and the deepest blush suffuse  
itself

itself over her face. The caliph always seated himself between us, which gave us an opportunity of looking at each other, without his being able to perceive it. Aaron loved reading, and was fond of poetry, and he frequently recited verses of his own composition. One day as he was taken up with a long lecture, I passed one of my hands behind his chair, and by a supplicating gesture, I entreated the princess to give me hers; I shall never forget the expression of her countenance at this moment; love, desire, embarrassment, and dread were depicted there with such simplicity and energy, as gave me great alarm; and hastily desisting from my intention, I arose, and stood before the caliph during the rest of the lecture. The following day I easily observed, that Abassia remarked I looked sad and thoughtful, and I perceived she was forming a project of consoling me, and that she was inclined to grant of her own accord, what she had before denied me, but she hesitated a long time ere she could determine upon it. One evening, at length, she timidly held out her trembling hand, I seized it with transport!—It is the province of virtuous love only to appreciate such an act!—How many lovers are there, who are unable to conceive, that this moment formed an epocha in my life, and that no other moment of happiness has since been sufficient to impair the delight its recollection always affords. The caliph, who, in the early part of this intercourse, had always attentively observed my motions, did not entertain the slightest suspicion of our intelligence; attributed to modesty and confusion the frequent perturbation and blushes of Abassia; and I

had been able to persuade him, that being entirely under the dominion of ambition and the love of glory, my soul was inaccessible to all other passions. He believed it, and through refinement of pride and tyranny, he was in some measure displeased with me for not being more sensible to the charms of the most accomplished woman in the universe; he would have felt a kind of gratification to have seen me anxious without hope, and I was aware, that he considered the sacrifice of a violent passion not alone sufficient to acquit me, with regard to what I owed him.

“ This situation continued for two months, when I at length ventured to write to the princess, and slip my note into her hand; she wrote me an answer, and I do not believe I ever suffered more than on the day I received this first reply; for an instant after the caliph began to read a subject which took up three tedious hours; being in possession of the first letter from Abassa, I would have given the half of my life for a few minutes liberty; but how was I compensated for this painful constraint, when I perused the tender and affectionate billet! My love and my imagination were inflamed to such a degree, that in my second note I ventured to demand a private interview; it was necessary to communicate this to Nouraha and Nasuf, but on the fidelity of those two slaves we had the greatest dependence: I laid down the whole plan of precautions which were to be observed in this dangerous undertaking. Abassa consented to all, and on the following night, at the foot of the mountain consecrated by our love, in the temple erected on the same

same spot which was witness to our first vows, I received into my arms my adorable bride. Abassa, believing there would be less danger in meeting in the seraglio itself, and having suggested all the means of effecting it, we agreed that henceforward I should pass the night there once or twice in a month. Nothing can equal the felicity I enjoyed, during the space of six months; difficulty and mystery gave a captivating charm to our union, which but rarely attends the most happy nuptials; as it was necessary to brave and risk every thing to see each other in private; thus danger itself imparted to love the endearing sentiment of passionate gratitude. But I paid dearly for this supreme felicity! Abassa now bore about her the fatal pledge of our union! When it was no longer possible to doubt of this, conceive, if you be able, what was the excess of my embarrassment, and dreadful anxiety! How was it possible to conceal a condition from the caliph, which we could not flatter ourselves would escape the slightest notice? Occupied day and night with this sole idea, I had not the least glimpse of an expedient to screen us from the impending danger: I was too well acquainted with the inflexible pride of Aaron, and the ferocity of his first movements of passion, not to be convinced, that on the discovery of our secret, he would exercise vengeance upon us with equal cruelty and madness. I shuddered on thinking, that I should involve Abassa in my fall, I upbraided myself in desperation, with the fatal passion which caused her ruin. O, how I then execrated the cruel tyrant, whose inhuman caprice, overturning the eternal



laws of reason and nature, robbed me of the happiness attached to the sacred names of husband and father, and, in the sanction of the most legal union, created me all the heart-rending remorse of criminal seduction! At length an event as fortunate as it was unexpected took place to snatch us from the destruction which menaced us. One of the tributary princes of the caliph erected the standard of rebellion. Aaron determined to go in person to subjugate and punish him. Judge of the joy this resolution caused me, for I was sensible the expedition could not be quickly terminated. It was the caliph's pleasure that I should accompany him, and I was obliged to entrust my dearest interests to two slaves, to Nasuf and Nouraha; but those slaves had feeling and grateful hearts. I left them the most ample instructions, and every thing was happily executed agreeably to what I had prescribed. Whilst, at the distance of three hundred leagues from Bagdat, we were laying siege to the rebel prince in his capital, Abassa became mother of a child, which Nasuf, according to my directions, sent to Mecca; those who carried it, and those by whom it was received, had not the least suspicion of its birth (30). Uncertain when I should see the child, and hoping to preserve its existence, I determined to enable myself one day to recognise it with certainty. I had learned a secret during my travels, which I communicated to Nasuf, and by the aid of which he marked, in an indelible manner, upon the right shoulder of the infant, a small olive wreath, a miniature representation of that which I had received from the hands of its mother.

ther. The child was not sent to Mecca before this operation was attended with perfect success\*.

“ I do not enter into the detail of the precautions I had taken to secure the secrecy of the princess’s delivery, I will content myself by observing they were so well combined, that the mystery remained undiscovered. At the army I received the news of this happy event, and three months afterwards the caliph returned victorious to Bagdat. With what joy, and tender solicitude did I meet Abassa! But the dreadful danger she had run, the anxious disquietudes we had experienced, induced me to take the resolution of renouncing in future the gratification of seeing her in private; love alone, which had rebelled against the prohibition of a tyrant, could thus make sacrifice of itself; I would have braved every peril as far as it related to myself; but this painful duty the welfare of Abassa imposed on me, as well as that of the two faithful slaves, whose lives each of our rendezvous exposed to danger. Abassa, impressed with the same sentiments, confirmed me in the resolution I had taken; I made her but one more nocturnal visit, and vowed, at her feet, never to see her again! With what rapidity did that night steal away! In what affliction did I taste the felicity of it! Violent and capricious state, in which love, at once both happy and miserable, did not without murmurs yield itself up to the sweetest transports, and found the cause of its torments, and the measure of its re-

\* It is known, that the savages have ever possessed this secret, and paint in this manner their bodies with plants, flowers, serpents, &c. ; this painting lasts the person’s life, and nothing can efface the design or colours.

gret, in the very excess of its happiness ! This interview was, indeed, the last ! Since that period, I have not in the course of seven years seen my wife, but in the presence of the tyrant. We wrote to each other every day, and during the first two years, the care of giving Abassa an account of her son added a new interest to our correspondence. The child, who continued still at Mecca, was brought up in obscurity under the care of a person who believed him to be the nephew of Nasuf. With Nasuf I not only appeared to have no intercourse, but, by a refinement in precaution, we agreed, that he should appear to be much dissatisfied with me ; he solicited a favour of me in public, I refused him in the coldest manner, and he made complaint to the caliph, adding that he was hated by me, and that I had even prejudiced the princess against him. The caliph, who esteemed him for his zeal and fidelity, spoke to us concerning him, we made a slight reply, and the caliph, in order to put an end to the domestic discussion, took Nasuf about his own person, and appointed another chief of the slaves for his sister. Nasuf affected to triumph in an insolent manner, I treated him with much seeming disdain, while the caliph was secretly gratified to see his slave venture to brave his favourite.

“ Princes have an infinity of such kind of gratifications, which cannot be divined but by living with them, and of which the vulgar can form no idea. Aaron was well persuaded that Nasuf detested me, and that I was really much piqued at his audacity ; this delusion relieved me from all apprehensions with regard to my son, in case the caliph should happen to discover

discover that Nafuf brought up a child at Mecca; I was certain he would then believe, without examination, that this child was in reality the nephew of Nafuf, and that he would make no conclusions which might lead to farther discovery. In the mean while I felt the strongest inclination to see a child that was so dear to me. Nafuf obstinately opposed this inclination, but on the expiration of two years, I declared to him my determined intention to go to Mecca, in the course of four months. Nafuf assisted me in concerting the means of taking this journey, and seeing my son, without becoming liable to suspicion; but alas! at the end of two months, he came to announce to me that this child, the object of such dear hopes and tender affection, had been attacked by a contagious disorder and was no more! I was deeply afflicted at this loss which our situation rendered irreparable. Under the tormenting restraint I had imposed upon myself, I had had no consolation but that of reflecting there was still left me a pledge of our union. Nafuf advised me to conceal this misfortune from the princess; he represented to me that she would perhaps sink under it, and that, as she was never to see the child, it was easy to deceive her in that respect, and to leave her for ever in an error which was so necessary to her repose. I yielded the more readily to his advice, as it seemed to me she might love me less on being informed, that the dear tie which united us was broken. Thus has she been ever kept ignorant of this fatal event. But how distressing her letters now became to me! She was continually making mention of



her child, every instant seemed to increase her maternal affection; I was obliged to reply, and while I wept for the death of my son, I was under daily necessity of giving her ample particulars respecting his education, his improvement and health: thus time, which cures the wounds of the heart, by the oblivion which necessarily accompanies it, was unable to produce such effect upon me. The unabating tenderness of Abassa, however, diverted my attention and afforded me great consolation; the caliph, fully convinced that we entertained for each other nothing more than esteem and confidence, no longer watched us, and we were left much at liberty. I was allowed to seat myself by her side, to converse with her in a friendly style, without his taking umbrage. Frequently we all three walked out together. The princess would place herself between her brother and me, and lean on my arm; sometimes the caliph, having orders to give, would leave us alone together for several minutes; how precious were these moments! What enchantment they threw over the rest of the day! What delicious remembrances did they leave us! The duties of my station occupied all the time I was absent from Abassa; I was alive to the glory of rendering a whole people happy, of having revived their industry, secured the blessing of peace, and made arts and commerce flourish. Surrounded by artists and men of letters, living with my brothers in perfect harmony, I tasted every delight which friendship and society could afford. My brothers were all married; in the midst of a loved and numerous progeny, I could not consider myself in exile;

exile ; I watched the growth of the children, and their existence in a great measure compensated for the loss of mine."

At this part of Barmecide's narrative, Ifambard observing it was past eleven, the company separated, after having agreed to meet again the next morning, to hear the remaining part of Barmecide's story.

## CHAPTER XVII.

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*THE RESENTMENT OF A DESPOT.*

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Sa haine va toujours plus loin que son amour.

*Mithridate de RACINE.*

Quelque fois à la cour

Le prix d'un long service est perdu dans un jour ;

C'est là que la faveur toujours trop recherchée

N'est qu'un piège funeste où la mort est cachée.

*Les Barmécides Tragédie de MR. DE LA HARPE.*

THE knights being assembled at nine in the morning, in Barmecide's apartment, that illustrious fugitive thus resumed his narration. " From the death of my child until the period of the dreadful catastrophe which terminates my story, my life does not afford any striking events ; for five years it had been exactly what I have been describing. At length fortune, which had done every thing for me, not only destroyed its work in a few instants, but was determined that the excess of my calamity should be still more astonishing, than the splendour of my prosperity had been. I was thirty-four years old ; I had been near twelve years the prime minister to the most powerful prince in Asia. I had always enjoyed his favour without interruption, and which no rival had even ever endeavoured to diminish ; yet, for several years past, I had remarked, that the caliph no longer loved me ; or in other words, that he no longer thought he did ; the friendship of  
princes

princes lies in their head, it is of a more brittle nature than even love itself; to preserve it requires all the attraction of novelty, or the pleasure of conferring splendid rewards upon its object; they then enjoy his astonishment, and that of the public, and even the envy of his rivals. They have faith in the confidence of a man as long as they bestow favours; but confide in him no more when they have nothing more to give. I was grand visier, and brother-in law to the caliph, he might have done every thing for my happiness! but he could not add to my fortune; besides, I may venture to say, that my elevation was not entirely his work; I owed my reputation, and the love of the public, solely to my labours and conduct.

“ Aaron is not an envious man; pride as well as greatness of soul preserves him from so mean a vice; but this same pride was mortified at the idea of my possessing some advantages independent of his favour. He was satisfied that others should think so, for that was doing honour to his choice; but he would not allow me to entertain such an opinion. The man, who formerly had lavished upon me the most flattering eulogiums, now had no other desire than to humble my self-love, to recal my remembrance to the point from which I had started, and to make me feel my dependency. I bore all these little vexations with an indifference, which tended to increase the secret malice of Aaron; he knew how to dissemble it, but the coldness of his conversation, and above all, his embarrassment when we were tête-à-tête, the most certain forerunner of disgrace with princes, convinced me how greatly he was changed with regard to me.

“ I had



“ I had always been in the habit of writing daily to the princess; she had promised me to burn all my letters, but not being able to make that sacrifice, she had entrusted them to Nouraha, who deposited them in a place known only to herself and her mistress. Every evening Abassa gave her the letter of the day, with orders to lock it up with the rest before she went to bed. Nouraha, who had been ill for some days past, finding herself, one evening, worse than usual, forgot to conceal the letter she had received from her mistress; she left it in her pocket and retired to rest. A young female slave slept in the same room, and was awaked in the night by the groans of Nouraha; the slave arose, and taking a light, went to her bed-side, and found, that, having been struck with an apoplexy, she had just breathed her last. Immediately the slave, with an intention of looking for the keys to plunder Nouraha, who had been enriched by the liberality of the princess, searched her pockets, and found a letter there, which had nothing in it that could expose Nasuf, but which contained proofs of our intelligence, and particulars relative to my son, as though he were still in existence. The base slave read this letter: she knew, as every one did, that the caliph, in giving me Abassa for a wife, had meant nothing farther than conferring on me the honour of receiving her hand; she conceived, that treachery would make her fortune, and full of this idea, left the seraglio at break of day, and without mentioning the death of Nouraha, carried my letter to the caliph. On leaving his apartment, she met Nasuf, and believing him to be both mine and the princess's enemy, she boasted of what she had

had been doing, and mentioned the contents of the letter; Nasuf, finding he was neither named nor indicated, instantly formed the plan which he has executed with so much courage. The caliph had ordered the slave to attend in the adjacent chamber, and Nasuf waited in great tremulation the result of Aaron's reflections. He was certain, that this imperious despot was meditating terrible vengeance; but could not foresee the atrocity of his cruelty. At length Nasuf, being called by the tyrant, entered his cabinet, and shuddered on observing his pale and ill-boding looks.—‘Nasuf,’ said he, ‘I am betrayed!’ ‘Yes, seignior,’ replied Nasuf, ‘the faithful slave, who has informed against the two guilty persons, has just been speaking to me of it; I have long entertained some vague suspicions in that respect; the princess and Barmecide dreaded my vigilance, and hence, seignior, is the true cause of the hatred they bear me.’ ‘Nasuf,’ returned Aaron, ‘may I depend upon thy fidelity?’—‘Command me, seignior.’ ‘Well then, let the unworthy Abassa be thrown into a dungeon for the rest of her life; let all who bear the odious name of Barmecide be extirpated from the face of the earth, and let them be all destroyed within the space of an hour (31).’ Nasuf, dissembling the horror he felt, seemed to share the tyrant's fury; but he represented, that it appeared to him more adviseable, to have all these executions take place at the same moment, and he begged to be charged only with mine; and with conducting the princess to prison. To this Aaron consented. This virtuous slave then repaired to Abassa, informed her of every thing, promised to favour my  
escape,

escape, to liberate her in a short time, and to accompany her in her flight. He took possession of all my letters, burned them, and conducted the wretched Abassâ to the dungeon the tyrant had allotted her. After having received a note from her for me, he came to my house; for during the heats of summer I did not live in the palace, but at a villa on the banks of the Tigris. I had passed that fatal night without retiring to rest; Aaron had charged me with so much business the preceding day, that I had not yet finished it. I was labouring for the barbarian, when Nasuf entered my chamber. 'Generous Barmecide,' said he, 'arm yourself with all your resolution, and read this billet.' I laid hold of the note he presented, and read these terrible words:

'O canst thou forgive thy unhappy wife? all is discovered! my fatal affection has undone thee! thy head is proscribed, thy brothers, with all their family, are suffering under the assassin's stroke, and it is from the bottom of a dungeon that I write this!—Nasuf will save thee, and he promises to unite us.—Ah! take pity upon Abassâ, and if thou be not as inflexible as the author of our misery, flee, my dear husband, and follow the guidance of Nasuf.'

'O! my dear brothers!' cried I, 'what, at this instant they are falling by the hands of ruffians!'—'Time is precious,' interrupted Nasuf, 'follow me, seignior.' 'What! shall I flee like a vile criminal, while my brothers are murdered! ah! I can see their blood stream, I can hear their lamentable cries, and the cries of their children and their wives.—No, I will avenge them, or perish!'—On saying this, I snatched my sword, and  
rushed

rushed towards the door. Nasuf, laying hold of me, cried; 'whither would you run? your brothers are no more, 'tis now too late, but Abassia yet lives, and you are going to cause her death.'—'I will stab the tyrant to the heart; I must avenge my brothers.'—'Ungrateful man,' cried Nasuf, 'do you owe nothing to the unhappy princess you seduced, do you owe nothing to me, who, for your sake, am exposing myself to destruction?' These words made me start, I remained motionless, and Nasuf, taking me by the arm, dragged me along.—I suffered myself to be led on.—Nasuf, being perfectly acquainted with my house, conducted me through a back door which opened into a court, at the end of which was a vault. He had the keys of the door, and of the vault; for it was through that door, which lay towards the fields, that he was used to see me secretly in the night time, whenever he had any thing particular to communicate to me; and in order not to be overheard, we were accustomed to pass this private court, and to hold converse together in the vault. He opened the door, and leading me into it, 'promise me,' said he, in the name of honour and gratitude, to have a regard for your life, and to wait here till I come to fetch you away; and I, in return, promise you to save Abassia, to take her out of prison, and conduct her into Europe.' At these words, I made the extorted vow, which I accompanied with a groan; he then departed, shut the door upon me, leaving me alone in the midst of the vault, in all the horrors of darkness. I was now, for the first time in my life, seized with terror! my imagination, struck with the massacre of my brothers, represented the



the horrid picture in such vivid colours, that the reality would scarce have agonized me more! I beheld them deprived of life, pierced with wounds, extended on the ground, with their wives and children murdered in their arms! I saw their disfigured countenances in death, still expressive of terroure and despair! —It seemed as if I were surrounded with these lamentable objects, a cold sweat bedewed my whole frame; and not being able to remain in one place, I wandered, notwithstanding the thick darkness which environed me, about the spacious vault, in so wild a manner, that when I met with any obstacles in my way, or walked over any unevenness of the ground, I drew back with horroure, my hair stood an end, as if I had trampled upon the bleeding bodies of my unhappy brothers. All these first moments of despair were devoted to the feelings of nature. Being at ease respecting the life of Abassa, love, which was concentrated in my heart, seemed to be effaced thence; the dreadful image of my whole family pitilessly murdered, annihilated every other idea; moreover, my passion, which had proved the cause of this horrid disaster, I now considered as a crime, and had it at this moment stood forwards, I should have repulsed it as a remorseful intruder. In fine, I could only contemplate my murdered brothers, and even the desire of vengeance was less powerful than my grief. At the end of four or five hours, however, not finding Nasuf return, a frightful mistrust distracted my mind with other thoughts, and new sensations; I began to fancy, that Nasuf had betrayed me, and that, being an accomplice of the tyrant, he had inveigled me into  
the

the vault to bury me there. I had not the key about me; I recollected, that Nasuf had taken away my sword, and reflecting on certain other circumstances, I no longer doubted of his perfidy. Twelve years discretion and devotedness should have screened Nasuf from this horrid suspicion, but fear and danger always produce mistrust, the just punishment of tyrants, and the greatest torment of the unfortunate. I forgot then all the services of Nasuf, being wholly taken up by reflection upon my own situation; it appeared to me out of all probability, that Nasuf should be able to return to my house to liberate me, and afterwards to persuade the caliph he had put me to death, whilst, on the contrary, every thing seemed to prove, that he was acting in concert with my implacable oppressor. The hatred and cruelty of Aaron would, I thought, have naturally induced him to order this kind of death, which would give him the assurance of a tedious agony, and the baseness of an assassin must have preferred treachery to any other expedient. Struck with these reflections, I considered my death as inevitable, and in the manner it seemed to approach, I contemplated it with horror. Then did my feelings on my own account call back my attention to the object of the dearest sentiments of my heart; then I fancied Abassa could not survive me; I represented her to my imagination all bathed in tears, and languishing in a dungeon, and I fell into a lethargic oppression of mind. From this state I was quickly roused by violent fits of rage and fury, and I experienced all the torments arising from unavailing hatred and unbounded desire of vengeance. O, how dearly did the distress of this  
single

single day pay for thirteen years of glory and felicity ! I should have sunk under its pressure, had not hope, which in any situation never entirely abandons us, suddenly revived my courage. Endeavouring to figure to myself the effect which the news of my death would have on the minds of the people, I imagined such an event was likely to create a rebellion ; the more I reflected, the more was I persuaded of this ; and I soon became fully convinced of it ; I saw the tyrant hurled from his throne, I saw Abassia's deliverance from prison, and I cherished the wild idea, that the people would hasten to effect my own. At length, towards the evening, I heard the approach of footsteps, the door of the vault opened, and I saw Nafus enter ; his aspect alarmed me, a deadly paleness disfigured his features, his clothes were torn and stained with blood ; in one hand he held a torch, and in the other, a drawn sword.—His looks, his gait, however, and the expression of his countenance, dispelled, in spite of me, all the dark suspicions I had been entertaining. I waited in silence, he came up to me, and returning my sword : ‘ Come,’ said he, ‘ every thing is ready for your escape, and I shall accompany you till day-break.’ At these words, I was struck with remorse for my unjust suspicions, and I rushed to the arms of this generous slave, the sole friend, the only defender that fortune had left me !—‘ Let us lose no time,’ said he, ‘ let us haste to quit this dangerous abode.’ On saying this, he threw a large cloke over my shoulders, and taking me by the hand, we went out together ; we found two horses at the back door, we mounted, and Nafus, advancing before me, bade me

me follow him, and recommended me to keep profound silence 'till we should get into the open country. The sky was overcast, yet the moon, from time to time darting its beams through the clouds, afforded, at intervals, sufficient light to enable us to distinguish the surrounding objects. At first we proceeded along the walls of Bagdat; I shuddered on beholding the towers of the tyrant's palace, and turning my eyes around, I perceived the mosque in which I had received the hand of Abassa; at this spectacle I wept!—A moment afterwards we passed before the gate through which I had entered eight years before in triumph, and I felt my heart ready to burst!—Every step I took reminded me of my past glory, and revived the idea of my felicity, which was never more to return! and yet when I was out of sight of these tormenting objects, and considered I should not see them again, I fell into a kind of annihilation still more painful than all the regret I had just felt. I sorrowfully accompanied Nasuf along the banks of the Tigris, when of a sudden a confused noise struck my ear, and I distinguished plaintive cries and deep groans at a distance.—Moved at what I heard, I lifted up my eyes, and on the opposite side of the river, just facing us, I perceived the mountain I held so sacred, and the summit of the temple.—I observed, with surprise, that the edifice was illuminated, and innumerable multitudes covered over the mountain.—‘Let us stop a moment here,’ said Nasuf, ‘and in spite of tyranny and proscription, receive a last homage, and more affecting than any that have been paid you during your prosperity.—‘Know,’ continued he, ‘that ever since morning,  
from



from the instant the report of your death was spread abroad, all your true admirers, all your real friends, have successively repaired to the mountain. There, on the temple you raised, where the indigent and oppressed deposited their complaints, which you never rejected, have they deplored your loss. The great, O Barmecide, who gave you magnificent entertainments, the men on whom you conferred considerable offices, and whose fortunes are derived from your bounty, are not in the number of these votaries. The most faithful even of such description conceal themselves, and are silent, the rest already are soliciting your spoils; but the lamentations you hear appealing to the throne of heaven issue from the heart, they come from the orphan who found you a father, from the oppressed widow you succoured, from the aged you comforted, from the work-man and artisan whose industry you encouraged, from the artist and man of letters, who are indebted to you for the display of their talents, and their glory.—In a word, in that temple of which, since your fall, and in the face of the tyrant, public gratitude has made you the divinity, eloquence and poetry are celebrating your virtues, and the people are deploring you.' (32) 'O Nafuf,' cried I, 'if this grateful people should again see Barmecide, if they should hear him implore their vengeance?' —'Vain hope,' interrupted Nafuf, 'the caliph indeed has not dared to forbid this public mourning, but he has stationed troops over the whole mountain, under pretext of maintaining order. And shall an unarmed multitude oppose them, a multitude which consists, for the most part, of old men and women,  
and

and children!’ At this I heaved a deep sigh, and turning towards the mountain, I contemplated in silence the spectacle it afforded; I enjoyed, with transport, the felicity of creating such regret; but the more I was affected at this, the keener I felt the sad reverse of fortune, which tore me from this beloved nation. ‘Unfortunate people,’ cried I, ‘you whom I carry in my heart, you are weeping at my death, and it is no illusion which afflicts you.’ ‘Yes, Barmecide has truly ceased to exist!—he can henceforward no longer contribute to your welfare!—Barmecide is no more!’ I could not go on, my sobs choaked my utterance, and I followed Nasuf, who was proceeding on his way; I turned my head towards the east, in order to keep the mountain as long as possible in sight; and when I saw it began to disappear, and for ever, my heart sunk within me, I lifted up my hands towards the place, and groaned in all the bitterness of despair. It seemed as if I had been bidding an eternal adieu to felicity and glory!

“We travelled the whole night, and during that time Nasuf related all the particulars I have mentioned, and he afterwards informed me in what manner he had continued to deceive the tyrant. When he came to me the first time, he had, in concert with the caliph, concealed round my house a party of armed men, who were to appear at an appointed signal. Nasuf had persuaded the caliph it was of the utmost importance, that the people should not be informed of this event till they had heard of my death. Aaron was sensible they would show more energy in defending, than avenging me, and he approved of the measure. Nasuf,

having locked me in the vault, returned to my apartment, and there this intrepid man, this heroic friend, drew his poinard, and made a large wound in his left arm, then he sprinkled the room, my bed, my clothes, and his own, with the generous stream that issued from it, and threw a large cloke thus stained with blood into the Tigris, which ran under my window; he then gave the expected signal, the troop of assassins rushed into the house, and all my domestics were taken into custody. Nasuf called the soldiers into my chamber; he told them he had found me in bed; that after having given me several wounds, I had sprung upon the floor, and wrapped myself up in my cloke, that having snatched the dagger from him, I had given him a wound; that at last he had overpowered and killed me near the window, and then thrown my body into the Tigris, in order that the people should not pay me funeral honours; and he pointed to my cloke, which was yet floating upon the water. Nasuf ordered the troops to see all my domestics out of the house; he then took the keys, and repaired to the palace; his extreme paleness and bloody garments served the more to corroborate his tale, and at the end of it, he dexterously took off the handkerchief that bound his arm without being observed by Aaron, and his wound opened afresh, and the caliph saw the blood gush out; he then no longer could doubt of the efforts I had made in my defence, or of my death. The better to secure the obedience of Nasuf, he had given him my house, and all it contained. Nasuf took occasion to observe to him, that he wished to return there to make sure of the gold, and other valuable things,

things, which the mansion must contain, and to find some papers which the caliph wished to secure; but added, that fearing the fury of the people, who in a few moments were going to hear he had immolated their idol, he would not only avoid entering the house in the day-time, but would afterwards conceal himself, and even withdraw from the court for a while. This precaution seemed extremely natural to the caliph; he reflected a moment, and then told him that having learned from the letter which had undone me, that I had a son, he wished to have him included in the proscription of my family, and desired Nasuf to set off secretly in the night to Mecca, and to take upon himself the discovery of the child. Nasuf joyfully embraced this proposal; he returned in the evening to my house, and entered with a single slave belonging to the caliph, to whom he gave my papers, and as soon as the slave went out, he came to liberate me. He assured me the caliph had not yet taken any violent measures against Abassa, ‘make yourself easy,’ added he, ‘on her account; I have instructed her in what she must say, should she be interrogated; I shall return to the tyrant after my journey to Mecca, he places great confidence in me, and I shall soon find means of delivering the princess, and taking our flight together, and, believe me, the happiest moment of my life will be that in which I shall restore her to your arms.’—Conceive, if it be possible, the emotions and the deep sense of gratitude which such a relation, and such promises, must have inspired in my breast.

“A little before day-light, Nasuf put a writing into my hands which contained the itinerary of the route.



I had to follow. We agreed I should proceed in the night only, as long as I should continue in the tyrant's dominions, and that when come into Europe, I should take up my residence in the country of Bavaria; that I should assume the name of Giaffar, should wait the arrival of Abassa and himself, and he promised to join me in the course of seven or eight months. Before we parted, he delivered to me a casket of precious stones and gold, which he had brought from my house, and he furnished me with an order signed by the caliph, and stamped with his seal, which he had received for himself; this writing imported, that he was travelling on a secret mission, and commanded all the subjects of the caliph to receive and lodge him. With this paper I was authorized to appear without exciting suspicion by my disguise, and even to hide my face by unfolding the drapery of my turban. Nasuf informed me he had taken farther precautions in favour of my journey, and when he arrived at Mecca he would write to the caliph, that he had lost this paper. It was thus that I parted from this faithful friend; I pressed him a long time in my arms, and wept; and when he had left me, I felt myself alone in the universe!—My journey, thanks to the ingenious forecast of Nasuf, was perfectly fortunate. Being arrived in Bavaria, I entrusted the count with my secret. In him I found the friendship of a brother, and all the discretion which my situation required; for the life of Nasuf, and perhaps that of Abassa, depend on the belief which prevails, that I no longer exist!—A few months after my arrival, Gerold, under pretext of some inquiries relative to the arts, dispatched one of his squires

to

to Bagdat, with instructions to get information relative to every thing that passed there.—It is more than two years since I arrived in Europe, and I continued a long time in hopes, that Nafuf would be able to perform his promises; but since the return of Gerold's emissary, my hopes are almost extinct. This emissary, who had been at the court of Bagdat, informed us that the nation still mourned for Barmecide; that no one knew what was become of the princess; that some said she had sunk under her afflictions, others that she had secretly escaped into Europe; that Nafuf was in high favour with the caliph, and possessed an immense fortune, and that residing continually in the palace, he never quitted the person of the caliph. After this report, I was but too well convinced, that Nafuf, satisfied with having been my deliverer, had not resolution enough to sacrifice his fortune and country in my behalf: I have no right, however, to complain; but this neglect of his promise condemns me to eternal obscurity!—To him am I indebted for my life, and I cannot resume my name, without exposing my benefactor to the vengeance of the tyrant! In fine, my fears and uncertainty respecting the situation of Abassâ fill up the measure of my misfortune!——Flattering myself, however, she is actually in Europe, and that Nafuf, either through remissness, or fearful, perhaps, lest we should be again united, has not directed her to flee to the dominions of the count of Bavaria, I have been wandering for more than a year; I endeavour to discover her steps, encouraged by a faint hope which every day still enfeebles. But to seek her is the only shadow of felicity that is left me, and to this dear

occupation does my device relate, which at the same time bears allusion to the *golden herb*, that Abassia sought after to save my life. Thus ought you now to conceive the reasons which attach me to Gerold's party. A fugitive, and a proscribed man, in him have I found not only my true sovereign, but a benefactor and a friend; attached by gratitude, and by the tenderest amity, engaged by the communication I have made of my secret, I am forced to combat in support of a cause which seems to me unjust. But I may venture to flatter myself that my presence here will be attended with some utility; Gerold has procured my admittance into the counsel of the confederate princes; there I may hope to be heard, and I console myself under the necessity which obliges me to take arms, with the hopes of instigating Gerold, and the other chiefs, to pacific measures."

## CHAPTER XVIII.

UNFORESEEN TROUBLE.

Che incanto è la Bellezza  
Ornata di virtù !

METASTATIO.

What's female beauty, but an air divine,  
Through which the mind's all gentle graces shine ?  
They like the sun irradiate all between,  
The body charms, because the soul is seen.

YOUNG.

WHEN Barmecide had finished his story, his two friends expressed their thanks and sensibility, and prolonged their visit more than an hour. At last, after the most tender farewell, they took leave of the sage Theobald, and immediately set out to the court of the dukes of Cleves (33). Upon the road, Oliver spoke much of Barmecide ; and in the misfortune of this illustrious outlaw he could see nothing to compare to his own ; for Barmecide, notwithstanding the sensibility of his soul, had never experienced the fatal sway of a predominant passion ; his heart, divided between ambition and love, could have been but transiently torn by violent sensations—" In a word," added Oliver, " he will always derive consolation from glory, and we may conclude, from his own story, that could he ever resume the splendid name of Barmecide, he would cease to weep for Abassa !" Isambard approved these



reflections, but soon brought back the conversation to the subject of Beatrice. This princess engaged both his imagination and his heart; and when he perceived the towers of her castle, and the white and azure standard which waved from the top of the edifice, he experienced a sensation of joy blended with a vague disquietude, with which his heart was at the same time sadly oppressed. The vast castle of Cleves is situate on the summit of a majestic mountain, covered with rocks, and woods, and plants of every kind; prolific springs of purest water issue from the rocks, forming cascades and streams, which fall and meander among the cypresses and pines, and wander over flowery spots of meadow ground. An ancient and gloomy forest almost encircles the mountain, and covers more than half of it; on the other side lies an extensive plain, watered by the Rhine (34). Arriving at the first guard, the knights declared their names, and the motives of their journey; then, being escorted by two soldiers, they proceeded forwards. When near the castle the soldiers blew a horn, which was a signal that announced to the princess the arrival of her new defenders. Immediately an answer was given by the sound of drums and trumpets. At last having climbed the mountain, and passed all the fortifications, they came to the draw-bridge, which was instantly let down. There a crowd of squires and pages belonging to the duchess waited for the knights. They led them through several spacious courts, to the sound of military music; all this preparation redoubled Isambard's emotion, and when he was within a hundred paces of the flight of steps which led to the apartments of the palace, and had

had alighted from his steed, he experienced such violent palpitation of heart, that he was forced to lean on Oliver's arm; who, remarking this extraordinary agitation, smiled, and almost at the same instant heaved a deep sigh, on recollecting his first interview with the unfortunate Celanira! The embarrassment of Isambard still increased, when he suddenly perceived, at the top of the steps, a group of ladies in the most superb dresses. One of them clothed in silver brocade, and appearing in the midst of the circle, was advanced some paces before the rest, and stood upon the brink of the steps; one of the squires, knowing her person, informed the knights it was the princess herself (35). The knights quickened their pace, and arrived at the foot of the stairs; they could then distinctly see this celebrated duchess; but no sooner had Isambard cast his eyes upon her, than, struck with astonishment, he started back, and looked at his unhappy friend.— Oliver, pale and trembling, and ready to faint, had his eyes cast upon the ground, and appeared motionless. The duchess observed him for a moment with some attention, then breaking silence, she addressed the two friends in a speech full of grace, and inviting them to accompany her, she entered the palace; Isambard, who, for several minutes past, had thought of nothing but his unfortunate companion in arms, now in his turn lent him the assistance of his arm. Oliver, rousing all his resolution, resumed a calmer deportment, and mounted the stair-case. In the vestibule they met Lancelot and Angilbert, who came and embraced them; and Lancelot addressing the two friends—"You have seen the princess," said he, "and were you not

much struck with the astonishing resemblance between her and the unhappy daughter of Witikind? I blame myself for not having mentioned this to Oliver, to whom this likeness must renew the painful remembrance of a tragical scene. I thought of this during our interview, but was averse to enter into that detail in the presence of a strange knight: I intended to have told him privately, and I forgot it." At these words Oliver stammered a few broken syllables, which Isambard hastened to interrupt, observing, that he himself had experienced equal emotion and commiseration. "Yet," observed Angilbert, "it is not one of those miraculous likenesses, of which so many instances are to be found in romance; on examining Beatrice you will find considerable difference between her and Celanira. Beatrice is not light-haired, her locks are auburn, and her eyes black, her eye-brows are much darker and larger than those of Celanira, her mouth is not so small, her long eye-lashes make her eyes appear larger, and her nose, though of the same form, is still more delicate; but that resplendent clearness of complexion, those same looks, the like expression of candour and sensibility, a similar tone of voice, the same size, and an uncommon similitude of manners, mien, and deportment, produce an illusion which will affect you a hundred times a day, by reviving the image of the most interesting person we ever saw at the court of Charlemagne." This conversation was interrupted by Oger the Dane, who, with some degree of confusion, came in quest of his old friends; he dreaded their raillery, but they were not in a humour to remind him of the cottage, and to laugh at his philosophy.

It was now time to repair to the saloon, and determine upon seeing the charming Beatrice again. Oliver avoided looking at her; Isambard gazed on her with admiration chastened by remorse: for while enraptured at the pleasure of hearing and seeing her, he considered himself as Oliver's rival; and if the reputation of the duchess had not long since made deep impression upon his heart, this fatal resemblance would have preserved him from any dangerous degree of amorous infection. But she had engaged his attention for more than three months past; the perusal of the tablets had completely turned his head; and finding her a thousand times beyond what fame had described her to be, and being well persuaded, that even a more perfect resemblance could not render Oliver faithless to the memory of Celanira, he fondly gave himself up to the enchantment of an infant passion. Isambard had a restitution to make, and, accosting the duchess, he presented her the tablets, relating in what manner they had fallen into his hands. Beatrice blushed, and requested him to keep them: "I flatter myself," added she, "that in examining my conduct you will ever find it consonant with the maxims those tablets contain." Isambard received this precious gift with transport; a gift which afforded a happy presage to his love. Oliver, who had been ill at ease ever since he entered the palace, went out at the end of an hour, on pretext of visiting the fortifications. An instant after he was followed by Isambard. When they met together, a moment's silence took place, on account of their mutual embarrassment; a last Oliver, affectionately grasping the hand of his



friend, said—"My dear Ifambard, I easily perceive what is labouring in your mind.—Ah! may the new passion, with which you are inspired, secure your felicity—'tis all the wish I have now to make.—Beatrice resembles *her*, but it is not *she*! You understand this, and the distinction ought to be sufficient to remove all your apprehensions." "It is true," returned Ifambard, "that I have an enthusiastic admiration for Beatrice, and perhaps I shall soon be deeply enamoured with her; but it will be without hope, for how can I encourage any? In a word, I have devoted my life to thee, and never shall I form any projects inconsistent with that sacred engagement."—Oliver pressed his friend's hand, and was unable to make reply; when some knights approaching them at this moment put an end to the conversation.

In the afternoon Lancelot presented the two friends to the principal ladies of the court. Ifambard was mostly struck with the beauty of the charming Delia, the favourite of Beatrice. This young damsel, who was only sixteen, was as remarkable for her candour and modesty as for the brilliancy of her person. Far from being elated with pride at this favour, she kept herself continually at a distance. On all occasions she sought the lowest place, and shunned every distinction. Admiration and praise seemed to astonish and embarrass her. The simplicity of her dress, the engaging pensiveness of her looks, and unalterable sweetness of her temper, imparted an interest to her whole person, which carried every thing before it. In fine, she afforded an instance, extremely novel in a court, of a favourite possessed of humility and diffidence, devoid

of all ambition, without ceremony, or pretensions, and meddling with nothing. Ifambard met with great pleasure the fair Amalberga, who was attached to Delia by the tenderest ties of friendship. He talked with her of Charlemagne, and the virtuous Amalberga could not hear the praises of that hero with indifference. At night the two friends were shown to their apartments; there they found arms of precious workmanship, rich mantles of purple hue lined with ermine, and other costly gifts, with which they were presented by Beatrice (36). Ifambard, who usually did not go to Oliver's room before half after eleven, observed, among the squires and pages who had brought the presents into his chamber, one of the latter, who was less than the rest, whose appearance was charming, but whose features he could not well distinguish, because he kept at a distance, and in the dark, and concealed himself behind the others. When they were all gone out, the little page remained in the room, and shutting the door, he then advanced up to Ifambard, who, looking steadfastly at him, immediately recognised Armofede; but no longer was it in his eyes the dangerous Armofede, whom he had found so charming a little while before; he was become acquainted with her artifices and all the baseness of her conduct, and she could now only excite indignation and contempt. After having eyed her from head to foot with the greatest indifference—"May I venture to ask, madam," said he, "what is the object of this masquerade?"—This question, and the cold manner in which it was uttered, entirely disconcerted the lady. However, soon resuming her wonted audacity, she replied, that  
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in order to avoid the persecution of Adalgise, she had taken refuge in the castle; that she had not confided her secret to any one; had obtained the office of page about the person of the princess, but had no particular employment assigned her, and therefore she was not obliged to live with the other pages, or to appear in public; she added, that the certainty of meeting Ifambard here had induced her to make choice of this asylum; and she finished her story with protestations of gratitude and friendship. During the narration, Ifambard, leaning in a negligent manner against the chimney-piece, heard her with indifference, and without making any interruption; when she had done speaking—"I cannot make a better return to your confidence, madam," said he, "than by giving you two useful pieces of advice. The first, that you carefully avoid the presence of Oliver; for should he meet you, I shall take upon myself to spare him the horror of seeing you a second time, by informing the princess who you are, that she may no longer give an asylum to vice. What I next recommend relates to prince Adalgise: you have, madam, a very easy way to escape his persecutions; instead of having recourse to falsehood and disguise, at once give up all imposture; relate to him, without deceit, the principal incidents of your life, and you will quickly see him blush at his ridiculous constancy." During this discourse, Armofede, quite confounded and motionless, recollected with terror the fatal prediction of the virtuous Meinrad; all pale and trembling, she was on the point of fainting away. At length, falling into a chair: "O heavens," said she, "is this a french knight? Is it  
Ifambard

Ifambard who thus treats a woman, that has just been giving him a proof of the most unsuspicious confidence!" This reproach was ill founded, but it touched the delicacy of the generous Ifambard: "Yes, madam," returned he, "I acknowledge all the decorums due to your sex, and you yourself are able to bear evidence of it. We owe the profoundest respect to all virtuous women, or to all who appear so, and such we ought always to suppose them; for being born to protect and defend the sex, we feel the necessity of giving them our esteem. But when we have evident proofs of their perverseness, we are exonerated from our attentions, and they can only pretend to our succour, which weakness and misfortune have ever a right to claim. Thus, madam, is it, that I have already combated for you, and that I should still be ready to render you the same services if you had occasion for them (37)." "At the time you mention," returned Armossede, "you seemed prejudiced against me indeed but were far from expressing that hatred and horror which appear now to govern you; what then have I done since that period?" "Excuse me, madam, from entering into superfluous explanations." "What!" cried Armossede, vehemently, "when you accuse me of being a monster, when you treat me with the most provoking contempt, you refuse to inform me what are my crimes! You condemn me without hearing, do you call that justice? Would you act in this way with a man, who could call you to an account for the outrage? Is it thus you respect the weakness of which you pretend to be the protector?" "Well, madam," answered Ifambard, "since our interview, I have



I have learned the whole story of the unhappy Oliver." Upon this Armossede, obliging Ifambard to listen to her, endeavoured to palliate her crime, in protesting she had never been able to believe that Diaulas was really the brother of Celanira; she supported this falsehood, and many others, by a flood of tears. Ifambard was not affected, yet he became a little softened. "Calm yourself, madam," said he, "and, for heaven's sake, let us put an end for ever to this fatal subject; conduct yourself here with prudence, and, above all, avoid the sight of Oliver, and be assured of my discretion. But let this interview be our last; you will never make me alter my opinion or sentiments; and I am now going to confess what will prove to you, that, in spite of all your charms, you have totally ceased to appear dangerous to me. You were the earliest object of my love; I first saw you on your return from Lombardy; your graces, your gaiety, your talents, turned my head. Almost at the same time I heard of your engagements with Oliver, and I then avoided you with the utmost care. The sentiments I felt for you being checked on their birth did not grow into a passion, but hindered me from giving reception to another, and cost me a long and severe combat!"—"What," returned Armossede, "and you have loved me! You must indeed be well cured of your flame, to be able to make such a declaration." Armossede now cast her looks on the ground, and remained in silence, and a tear or two escaping from her eye-lids crept softly down her cheek. Ifambard began to feel a painful sensation at the bottom of his heart, which seemed like com-  
passion.

passion. Armossede arose—"Farewel, feignior," said she, "my giddy head has led me into many an error; but if bitter regret and sorrowful contrition can make any reparation, this evening has expiated them all." On saying this, she advanced towards the door, when the good knight, seeming quite at a loss, and relenting of his harshness, followed her in a respectful manner, as if he wished to bring her back: Armossede put her hand to the latch of the door, and turning towards Ifambard—"Farewel then for ever!" said she, "and at least be assured, that in spite of your hatred"—"My hatred!" cried he, "can you believe"—An inexpressible embarrassment prevented his going on with the sentence; he took hold of the pretty hand he saw laid upon the latch, and when he felt that hand within his own, his embarrassment still increased; he would fain make reparation by politeness, for a scene which he thought he had carried too far; he was fearful of showing any thing like gallantry; he durst not speak, yet was aware how ridiculous it was to continue silent. This perplexity gave him an air of constraint and irresolution, which Armossede took for tender emotion: at length, very fortunately for Ifambard, the voice of his squire was heard in the anti-chamber, when Armossede, pulling down her hat over her eyes, opened the door, and hastily went away.

## CHAPTER XIX.

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A COUNCIL OF STATE.

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*L'avis du plus grand nombre est souvent moins bon.*

THE next morning, as Ifambard was walking out with Lancelot, and going along a spacious gallery, he passed by a chamber in which he heard music. He stopped, and listened to a charming voice which sung the following ballad, accompanied by a lute.

They say I'm in love with PHILENE !  
O heav'ns ! how my case they mistake !  
Whate'er I may feel for that swain  
Is not LOVE—it is liker to HATE.  
I blush when I see him—I do—  
His presence still gives me distress ;  
Yet, the more I think on him, 'tis true,  
I perceive—that I hate him the less.

If Phillis say ought in his praise,  
Be it ever so trivial and slight,  
Ah ! how my poor soul it affrays ;  
And fills it with ire and despight.  
To love him 's a crime, in my view ;  
And yet I must freely confess,  
That the more I think on him, 'tis true,  
I perceive—that I hate him the less.

Of all the fair nymphs of the plain  
 Letitia was dearest to me—

Letitia's in love with PHILENE—

Letitia with horror I see :

My envy I cannot subdue,

My jealousy cannot suppress :

And the more I think on him, 'tis true,  
 I perceive—that I hate him the less.

If he ask me to dance, in the grove,  
 With reluctance I tender my hand :

Is this any token of love,  
 When I stagger, and scarcely can stand ?

Palpitations and pantings ensue,  
 The cause I'm unable to guess :  
 But the more I think on him, 'tis true,  
 I perceive—that I hate him the less.

While musing, a few days ago,  
 I met him alone in a mead ;  
 I ne'er was so flutter'd, I know ;  
 I turn'd me, and suddenly fled.

Yet, alas ! though I fled from his view,  
 I could not my feelings repress ;  
 And the more I think on him, 'tis true,  
 I perceive—that I hate him the less.

Ah ! why should sensations so keen  
 Lay hold on so youthful a heart ?

Ah ! why should a girl, not fifteen,  
 Endure so tormenting a smart ?

A smart which I cannot eschew ;  
 For his absence augments my distress :  
 And the more I think on him, 'tis true,  
 I perceive—that I hate him the less.

But,



## THE KNIGHTS OF

But, be it *aversion*—or *whim*,  
 My *Reason* it ne'er shall disgrace ;  
 I will ever do justice to HIM :  
 He's the flow'r of the swains of the place.  
 Perhaps my aversion may cease,  
 Perhaps there's a cure for my pain ;  
 I feel it already decrease—  
 Ah ! how can I *bate such a swain* ?

After the song was over, the two knights continued their walk. “ The young person you have just heard,” said Lancelot, “ is in love with one of the princess's pages, and upon that passion, which she herself does not seem to understand, Angilbert composed the song, and gave it to her. The words she finds so expressive of her own feelings, that she takes delight in singing it every day ; but do you know who the little page is, who thus turns her head ? It is Armosfede in disguise, and who is only known here by Angilbert, Oger, and me. She has been amusing herself till she has an opportunity of making more brilliant conquests, in creating mischief among the maids of honour of the princess ; but Beatrice has disapproved of this intrigue, and the apartment of the young ladies has been shut against her for a fortnight past.” “ And how long has Armosfede been here ?” demanded Isambard. “ She came with Oger,” replied Lancelot, “ about three weeks ago.” This answer made Isambard laugh ; but he thought it proper to inform Lancelot, that Oliver, having quarrelled with Armosfede, had great reason to detest her, and he would do right not to speak of her in his presence. Lancelot promised to mention this to Angilbert. “ He will not be astonished at this rupture.”

rupture," added he, "for he has never believed the public report, that they were married, or that Armossede was indeed worthy of becoming the wife of Oliver."

During this interview, Lancelot informed Isambard, that he was going in an hour's time to the camp of the allied princes, to carry the last proposals of peace from the duchess. Lancelot, departing, repaired to Gerold's tent; he met the sage Theobald, who was waiting for him there, and the knight, and the venerable old man, acquitted themselves of their mission. The count listened to them with calmness, and replied, that he should assemble a council of the princes, and there deliberate upon the duchess's offers; "but I believe," added Gerold, "that they will be judged insincere; it is imagined, that so many valiant warriors, as now compose the court of Beatrice, are far from inspiring her with pacific sentiments; their interests perhaps are opposite to ours; the pretensions of the king of Pannonia, for instance, are sufficiently known, and should Beatrice consult him, he would not counsel her to offer peace upon such conditions as we could accept." "Seignior," replied Lancelot, "I am not acquainted with the projects of Theudon, but I know, that the princess consults only her reason and her duty. I know besides, that all the knights, who are armed in her defence, are fearless of war, but have no interests which make them desire it. They have all given proofs of their prowess in the field of honour, and no new exploits can increase the brilliant reputation of The Knights of the Swan, Oger, the Dane, the brave Angilbert, and the sons of duke Aimon; in fine, seignior, I can assure you, that you  
have

have many true admirers at the court of Beatrice, and that the person who appears to have the greatest share of her favour, far from being against you, openly professes the warmest attachment for you." "And who may that person be?" returned Gerold: "It is the bosom friend of Beatrice," answered Lancelot, "the young and beauteous Delia, who was born, she says, in your dominions; and all her vows are in behalf of her sovereign; and if the duchess followed her advice in that respect, your wishes, seignior, would soon be gratified." At these words, Gerold being surprised and touched, asked a thousand questions concerning Delia: Lancelot, who was passionately enamoured with her, answered in a manner that appeared greatly to interest the count of Bavaria; and during the rest of the conference there was no question of any thing but the charming Delia. After Lancelot had retired, Gerold called an assembly of the princes; a grand council was held, and Barmecide was admitted a member. Gerold read the proposals of Beatrice: she declared her resolution to remain free; that violent measures would never induce her to make choice of a husband; but that she wished for peace, and offered to pay the expense of all the preparations of war. Hartrad, count of Thuringia, who had long been smitten with a violent passion for Beatrice, first began to speak. He maintained, that peace on such conditions could not be accepted without dishonour; and that the allied princes would become an object of ridicule in the eyes of all Europe, if, after the fame of this enterprise, they should ingloriously retreat without compelling the duchess to choose one among them for

for a husband. Henry, duke of Friuli, who also loved Beatrice, was of the same opinion. The duke of Spolitto was almost the only person who appeared inclined to peace. Gerold combated his sentiments in a long speech, equally artful and eloquent, and endeavoured to prove, that mere policy, independent of all private interest, should lead them to reject the proposals of the dukes. Barmecide then requested leave to speak. After having drawn a striking picture of the dreadful evils of war; "when we reflect," said he, "on these terrible calamities, every passion ought to subside, and the voice of humanity, to suppress those of ambition, resentment, and love. It is said dishonour would attend the acceptance of the proposed peace.— When a prince submits to humiliating conditions, when he concludes a treaty contrary to the interests and rights of his subjects, then it is that he makes a dishonourable peace; but when nothing is required of him that can prove prejudicial to his nation, he commits a crime in continuing hostilities, and will alone be responsible for the blood that shall be shed. I will go farther, and observe, that should an enemy demand an equitable restitution, a prince ought to make it, and thereby expiate the crime of usurpation, for such may all conquest be considered. But in the present case there is no question of these great sacrifices. The duchess of Cleves, affording a noble example of moderation, demands peace of the aggressors, and tenders them her treasures to spare the blood of her subjects. Should this be refused, with what ardour will they combat in her cause? And as for ourselves, can we depend upon the zeal of our troops?

Have



Have they their homes to defend? What interest have they in the war? they are only to experience the fatigues and dangers of it. And of what avail is the valour and ability of the chiefs, when the soldiers are discontented and murmur? Their enthusiasm it is which produces victory; and discouragement and dismay will prevail in our camp, while the energy of the besieged will multiply both their resources and successes. Upon your decision depends the fate of that multitude of men which composes the two armies. Our tents, extended along the foot of these hills, have already struck terror into the minds of the peaceful inhabitants of this fine country; with a single word you may dispel all their alarms. Ah! turn your eyes towards those fertile fields which surround you; look at those cottages, the respectable abodes of innocence; behold that flourishing army; and consider, that in rejecting peace you pronounce a sanguinary sentence, the prompt and terrible execution of which will every where carry devastation and death. Those cottages, those villages, will be burned and destroyed, those fields will be desolated, those soldiers, now so showy and alert, will be massacred, and at your command too; for all these evils, all these cruelties, will be your own work.—And in tribunals, instituted for the punishment of crimes, shall the judge be unable to pronounce sentence upon the vilest wretches without repugnance, while princes, assembled in council, shall coolly consign thousands of innocent men to death!—Yes, I will ever maintain, that defensive war alone can be reasonable and just; and where peace can either be accepted or proposed, a declaration of war is the most horrid  
of

of crimes. Success even cannot diminish its atrocity in the eyes of natural and compassionate beings, for true glory is inseparable from moderation, justice, and humanity."

This speech gave rise to the most violent debates; Hartrad, and the duke of Friuli, who felt themselves particularly pointed at, expressed the most violent resentment against Barmecide: and being ignorant of the real name of that great man, and considering him only as the obscure Giaffar; they replied with disdain and anger. Barmecide retorted with all his natural spirit; but Gerold put an end to this dispute by observing, that if liberty of opinion were not allowed, it was useless to summon a council. "In this respect," said he, "I may be permitted to offer myself as an example; two of the dearest friends I have in this assembly are the duke of Spoleto and Giaffar; both of them differ with me in opinion, and I am not incensed against them. They have spoken conscientiously, and have done their duty: ours is now to weigh their reasons, and duly to reflect upon them. I therefore propose, that nothing be decided upon with precipitation; that the duchess be informed, that we shall maturely examine her proposals before we make reply; and that we desire that the truce, which expires the day after to-morrow, should be prolonged another month. During this time, new ideas and new negotiations may bring about a pacification, and especially as in that interval the prince of Greece will certainly arrive at our camp, and that new reinforcement will facilitate a treaty of peace." This proposal was combated by Hartrad and the duke of Friuli;

but every other member of the council adopted it, and it was carried by a plurality of voices. The council immediately named two deputies, commissioned to carry their decision to the princefs. Beatrice chofe to receive the deputies in the prefence of all the knights who defended her caufe; ſhe accepted their propofals, and confented to the prolongation of the truce.

An hour after the departure of the deputies, the arrival of Barmecide was announced; as the princefs had made a rule never to grant a private audience to the warriors from the enemy's camp, Barmecide could only fee her in the midft of her court. Being admitted into her prefence, he informed her, that the count of Bavaria, having heard that one of her ladies was a native of his dominions, was defirous of making ſome inquiries concerning her. "Seignior," replied Beatrice, "it is proper that Delia herſelf ſhould gratify the curioſity of her ſovereign in that reſpect: you ſhall fee her; you ſhall inſtantly be conducted to her apartment; but as intrigue has never found its way into this caſtle, all myſtery is baniſhed; all our proceedings are public, becauſe our intentions are all upright and pure; I am in the midft of my friends and defenders, and unlimited confidence is the leaſt proof of gratitude which I can give them. My frienſhip for Delia, and your attachment to the count of Bavaria, may bring ſuſpicion upon a ſecret interview. To avoid therefore all falſe interpretations, you will permit, ſeignior, that the knights who are here preſent may be witneſs to this interview, and I requeſt them to accompany you." At theſe words Barmecide bowed low, and withdrew. The Knights of the Swan,  
Lancelot,

Lancelot, Roger, young Guichard, and some others, attended them to Delia's apartment. When Barmecide was gone out of the saloon, he turned towards Oliver, and taking him by the arm, "There," said he, "is a princess of twenty years old, whose policy is worthy the imitation of all the sovereigns of the earth;—we should then see no more revolutions." "Yes," replied Oliver, "*goodness, equity, uprightness*, such is the secret of the great art of government, and Beatrice possesses these qualities." "I am fearful," returned Barmecide, "lest this secret, which is so simple and excellent, should be lost with her; at least for a long while." While he was thus speaking, they found themselves at Delia's door, and Barmecide entered with the other knights. Delia was alone, and employed in reading; she was much surprised at seeing so numerous a company: Barmecide approached, and informed her, that the count of Bavaria was desirous of knowing in what part of his dominions she was born. "That prince," added Barmecide, "has been highly flattered on hearing of the interest you take in his situation. He laments on reflecting that misfortunes, or perhaps injustice, to which he is a stranger, have probably driven you from your native country; he makes you a tender of his friendship, madam, and of his protection and influence in favour of your relations, should you have any in his dominions." During this discourse the meek and timid Delia changed countenance several times, and nearly fainted away.—She replied, with a low and tremulous voice, that she did not, neither ought she to complain; that she was an orphan; that the goodness of the princess rendered her



situation as happy as it could be made ; and she added, on casting down her eyes, that she should ever offer up the most ardent vows to heaven for the happiness of her sovereign. " Well, madam," returned Barmecide, " your sovereign is entitled to present you with a slight acknowledgement of his gratitude, since he is deprived of the pleasure of affording an asylum to a person of your worth, at least you will not refuse these pledges of his esteem and friendship, which he has commissioned me to offer you." Then Barmecide, causing his squires to come forward, took from them an open basket, adorned with green ribbands, and filled with trinkets and jewels, and placed it on the table before her. Delia coloured, and heaved a deep sigh. " These splendid ornaments," said she, " would ill become me ; but, seignior, I shall receive with respect and thankfulness this green ribband ; it is the colour of the count of Bavaria, and is the only one of his gifts I can accept." On saying this Delia took off a broad ribband from the basket, and tied it round her waist. Barmecide in vain endeavoured to prevail upon her to retract her refusal. Delia persisted in it with firmness ; Barmecide took back the gifts, and observed as he went out, that the favourite was, in her way, in every respect, as extraordinary a character as the princefs.

## CHAPTER XX.

THE MYSTERIOUS DWELLING.

— Non e prudenza  
 Ma follia de' mortali  
 L'arte crudel di prefagirsi i mali.  
 Sempre e maggior del vero  
 L'idea d'una sventura,  
 Al credulo pensiero,  
 Dipinta dal timor.  
 Chi stolto il mal figura,  
 Affretta il proprio affanno;  
 Ed assicura un danno;  
 Quando e dubbioso ancor.

METASTASIO.

Un noir dessein se forme à l'ombre du mystère.

PRADON.

ISAMBARD still recollecting with great concern the story of the unhappy Azoline, which Ordalia had related, was now convinced that Roger was, in fact, the lover of that unfortunate lady; he often observed him colour and tremble, when he had purposely mentioned the name of Rotbold in his presence. Thus persuaded, he proposed a walk into the forest with him; and when they were out of the castle, he observed he had wished to speak to him in private, in order to justify the memory of an innocent person, whom he doubtlessly considered as culpable. This preface, which announced the death of Azoline, made Roger start! he beseeched Isambard to explain himself, and the

Knight of the Swan related the sad adventure of that lady. Roger, who during this narrative was alternately afflicted with sorrow, and transported with rage, shed a flood of tears, and engaged himself, under the most terrible oaths, to avenge the death of the unhappy Azoline, by immolating her barbarous oppressor, and the infamous Tryphon, his accomplice.—“Alas!” cried Roger, “the crime of these monsters have rendered me guilty myself. I have calumniated virtue; I accused the innocent Azoline; contempt and indignation had cured me of hopeless love; while she was dying in uttering my name, I was complaining of her infidelity and perfidy; nor did I know my fatal error till it was no longer in my power to make expiation!” Ifambard, deeply affected at Roger’s despair, shared his affliction, and felt, that of all the movements of the soul pity is the strongest and promptest inducement to friendship. He promised to see him every day in private, to hear his complaints, and soothe his regret. Roger knew how to value such a friend, and his acquisition afforded him the greatest consolation he was capable of receiving. As they were walking along the skirts of the forest, Ifambard observed a small house at a distance, at the foot of a hill, standing entirely by itself; he had been for an hour past extremely thirsty, and was desirous of stopping a moment at this house in order to drink. The knights repaired thither, and finding the door half opened, they entered the house. After passing through a kind of vestibule, they came into a room which was decently furnished; a little maid servant thirteen or fourteen years old was sitting alone before a large furnace,

nace, upon which was placed a still. Above the furnace was a shelf full of bottles, of various coloured liquors. "This," said Ifambard, "must be the dwelling of some chemist; but truly he has made choice of a very retired and wild situation. "Is your master at home?" demanded Roger; "I have no master," answered she, "the person on whom I wait is a woman." "It is singular," said Ifambard, "and will not your mistress then see any body?" "O, yes, people come after her, but not so often as formerly; we have seen hardly anybody for a fortnight past, but the little page?"—"What page?"—"The pretty little page from the castle; I don't know his name. They who come here scarce ever mention who they are." "But," interrupted Roger, "tell us, I beg of you, the name of your mistress."—"Marcelina," said the girl.—"Ah! let us go hence," cried Roger instantly, "you must not quench your thirst in this house; let us be gone." On saying this, he took Ifambard by the arm and led him out, without waiting his reply. When they got into the forest, Ifambard questioned Roger upon what had just passed. "This Marcelina," answered he, "is an old woman, who is thought by the people of the country to be a sorceress; and, according to all appearances, she deals in poisons. She pretends to practice chemistry, to foretel events, to prepare charms and philters; it is said she conjures up departed souls, and forces the dead from their tombs; but it seems evident enough, that she has a fatal power over the living, for it is known, that two persons have lately perished by drinking her potions. The princess, who is averse to the very appearance of des-



potism, does not banish her from the country ; but the old woman has been indicted upon several accusations, and prosecution is going forward against her : but this will be a tedious affair, because the humanity of the laws allows the accused person very extensive measures of defence in matters of a criminal nature." Ifambard, on reflecting upon this adventure, imagined the pretty little page, of whom the servant had spoken, might be Armofede ; and the idea of her secret propensity to these vile superstitions increased the contempt he already conceived for her.

On going out of the forest, the knights entered an extensive plain. Ifambard observed with surprise a large and open tent, which the workmen had just been erecting, and inquiring of Roger if he knew for what it was intended ; " All I am acquainted with," replied the knight, " is, that the princess is to appear there to-morrow ; that all her troops, and the inhabitants of the canton, are invited to attend her. The duchess has informed us, that she will not declare her intentions but in presence of all the people assembled together. We suppose she means to make a speech relative to the persecution she suffers." This explanation deeply interested Ifambard, and he waited for the morrow with extreme impatience.

## CHAPTER XXI.

A VIRTUOUS AND ENLIGHTENED PRINCESS.

Toute puissance vient de Dieu, et tout ce qui vient de Dieu, n'est établie que pour l'utilité des hommes ; les grands seroient inutiles sur la terre, s'il ne s'y trouvoit des pauvres et des malheureux. Ils ne doivent leur élévation qu'aux besoins publics ; et loin que les peuples soient faits pour eux, ils ne sont eux-mêmes tout ce qu'ils sont, que pour les peuples.

MASSILLON.

La prevention du peuple en faveur des grands est si aveugle, que s'ils s'avisent d'être bons, cela iroit à l'idolatrie.

LA BRUYERE.

THE next morning, at ten o'clock, the duchess of Cleves gave notice to all the knights, that she was going to the plain : it was in the month of November ; but the air was as soft and serene as on one of the finest days of autumn ; the princess was dressed with remarkable elegance and simplicity, and her person never before appeared to such advantage. Attended by all the knights and ladies of the court, she arrived at the appointed place. The whole plain was covered with people, who for two hours had been waiting for the appearance of their sovereign ; the moment they saw her, the sky resounded with shouts of joy, acclamation, and applause. Beatrice requested the splendid train which accompanied her, to stop for a moment ; when, leaving the circle which surrounded her, she advanced alone upon the plain, and mixed in the crowd that idolized her. Every one pressed forward

to look at her, but at the same time was fearful of thronging her; at length they made an opening, and she passed through the multitude to the tent, but with a slow pace, and frequently stopping to speak with those who were near her, and beholding them all with looks expressive of tenderness and gratitude. When she approached the tent, the crowd stood still. Beatrice, turning towards them, observed, that the fineness of the day rendering the tent useless, she was averse to go into it, but that having occasion to harangue them, she rather wished to have the stage removed from it into the open air, in order to be heard by all present. This was instantly done; and the knights being now arrived, all, without distinction of rank, ranged themselves around the princess. Theudon, however, with Isambard and the youngest of the sons of Aimon, found means to place themselves very near her. Oliver, who was at a greater distance, could not see her; but Beatrice had him called, observing to Isambard, that she wished him not to be separated from his friend. Oliver came forwards, and placed himself beside Isambard. Deep silence prevailed, and the princess expressed herself in the following terms: "I have been two years sovereign of this country; and I may venture to flatter myself, that I have added to its prosperity and happiness; but of this I do not vainly boast. Young, and without experience, I could only claim the merit of blameless sentiments and upright intentions. I wanted knowledge, but I was sensible of my deficiency; I sought after wise counsels, and weighed them with a degree of reason, which nothing has yet been able to corrupt.

My love for the public welfare has stood me in the stead of talents; and in that tender and sublime sentiment consist the wisdom and genius of sovereigns. To my respectable preceptor, to the sage Theobald, am I indebted for my principles, and my notions of real glory; and to him you owe the institutions and new laws which secure your liberty, and consequently your happiness. From him I learned, in my infancy, that unjust prerogatives are less degrading to those who grant them, than dishonourable to such as retain them. He has taught me, that it is a noble task to govern a people who think, and who are sensible of their rights; for such only can judge of the conduct of their chief; such only can estimate virtue, and dispense glory, by their approbation and love; while the praises and obedience of slaves evince only their own baseness and fears. He taught me, too, that one of the most important duties of a sovereign is to avoid war, and to submit to the greatest sacrifices for the preservation of peace. Judge then of the sorrow I now feel on account of the powerful league which is formed against me. The confederate princes insist, that I should make choice of a husband among them; but the injustice and violence of their conduct sufficiently show, that were I to yield to their requisition, I should give you a tyrant to reign over you; and that sole consideration is enough to induce me to persist in my refusal. Finding, therefore, that war is inevitable, I have been reflecting upon the evils it will bring upon you, and not being able to support that dreadful prospect, I have taken, for some time past, the resolution I am now going to make known to you. Ambition, and the de-



fire of reigning over this fine country, have chiefly instigated the princes to appear in arms against me; if Beatrice did not possess the duchy of Cleves, there would be no contest to obtain her hand. My rank I only value as far as it is conducive to your welfare; and happy should I be to renounce it, to secure the public tranquillity."—Here a thousand confused and mournful cries interrupted Beatrice. "*No, no,*" exclaimed the crowd from every quarter, "*we will live, and, if it be necessary, die for Beatrice!*"—These acclamations were accompanied by moans and sobs; and the troops of the princess, who had mingled with the crowd by her orders unarmed like the rest of the people, lifted up their helmets, and cried out, "*We will deliver you from your persecutors; we promise you victory; we swear to keep our words.*"—All the people repeated the vow, and exclaimed, "*And we also will fight; we will all of us take arms.*" This universal enthusiasm touched the hearts of the knights, who were spectators of this moving spectacle, and they united their voices to the acclamations of the people and soldiers. The tender-hearted Isambard could not restrain his tears: Oliver had hitherto, according to custom, refrained from looking at the princess, but being deeply affected at her speech, and, above all, at the sound of her voice, he turned his face towards her, and burst into tears. In her he wished to contemplate the splendid triumph of goodness and virtue. How graceful does glory appear, when attended by youth and beauty!—This was the first time that Oliver ventured to gaze on that enchanting face, which recalled to his mind so dear and so mournful a remembrance.

brance. Admiration held in suspense every other sentiment; but meeting a look from her, he started!—he thought he beheld Celanira!—This look had the same expression.—The wretched Oliver, bewildered and dismayed, cried, “O heavens! what new kind of punishment!”—and he cast down his eyes all streaming with tears. Fortunately the tumult was too great, and the agitation too universal, to allow his distress to be particularly observed. At length Beatrice making a sign that she wished to speak, silence again prevailed. After having expressed her gratitude, and how deeply she was affected, she begged to be heard to the end of her speech without any interruption, and she thus went on: “It was not my intention to declare any fixed or hasty resolution; I was only desirous of making a proposal, and offering you my advice. You are free, and I am not: Providence, in having placed me in the rank I fill, has consigned me an employment which I cannot quit without your concurrence; an employment, of which you would have the right to deprive me, if I became unjust or tyrannical. Thus am I yours; to you are my days devoted, and you alone can dispose of me; but before you reject the measures I recommend, let me intreat you to give them your most serious consideration; I have taken due precautions: having no heir, I have thought it would be advantageous to you to pass under the dominion of the most powerful and most virtuous monarch in Europe. I have founded Charlemagne upon the occasion; and if you will accept my abdication, that great prince will become your sovereign; or if you rather prefer a republican government, he will be  
your

your protector and ally ; the choice will belong to yourselves : for my own part, I believe, with the sage Theobald, that a perfect government cannot exist, because it is impossible to fix the inclinations of men, or to limit their desires, and because there must be chiefs ; and the ambition of those chiefs will always overturn the most sublime institutions, or render them of no avail. But if it be true, that peace and tranquillity are the best of blessings, monarchical government, founded upon laws, would perhaps prove the best of all, were the subjects and the sovereigns once convinced of this grand truth, *that the people have always the right and the power to depose tyrants* (38). However, do not imagine that personal alarms, or any selfish motive, have induced me to renounce the noble occupation of governing you ; my glory is to render you happy, and I desire your welfare with an earnestness that will insure the success of my endeavours. Your love, your courage, and the valour and talents of these generous knights who are come to my succour, are certain pledges of victory ; but what tears will that triumph cost me ! Will it console me for the lives that must be lost ?—Ah ! suffer me to give up a pre-eminence which exposes you to such dangers ; I shall not abandon a country which is so dear to me ; I will continue to live among you in willing obscurity ; and when I see you peaceable and happy, I shall have made no sacrifice ; I shall have given up nothing.”—Here the duchess, much affected, left off speaking, and put both her hands up to her face.—“ *May Beatrice be always our sovereign,*” cried the people with transport. This general acclamation was a thousand times repeated

peated with the liveliest enthusiasm, and the applauses were redoubled. The people then intreated the princess to promise them to wave her intentions. Beatrice lifted up her hands, and made the vows they required; then did their expressions of joy and gratitude and love rise to a pitch of intoxication and idolatry. After this, the people cut down large branches of trees, of which they formed a litter, and prevailing on the princess to seat herself thereon, they bore her in triumph to her palace in the midst of the acclamations and shouts of the multitude. In public admiration there is a kind of infection, from which it is almost impossible to preserve ourselves, at least for the moment, even when it is usurped; but when reason approves, and envy cannot attack it, there arises from it a sensation perhaps of the strongest nature the human heart is capable of experiencing. Whatever might be the degree of admiration, when we admire alone, the mind can remain composed; but public and universal plaudits, the charm and splendour of glory, exalt admiration and enthusiasm to a supreme degree.—All the knights, those even who were not in love with the duchess, were seized with this irresistible emotion; and when they were returned to the palace, Lancelot, who was in a corner of the saloon by the side of Oliver, spoke to him, in raptures, of the scene which had just passed before their eyes. “I must confess to you,” said he, “that had I been obliged to declare the kind of sensation the duchess then inspired me with, I should have answered very naturally, and with great truth, that I *adored* her; and yet I love another, and passionately too. My mind, however, being now composed,  
I feel



I feel nothing farther for Beatrice than admiration and the tenderest attachment; but the fascinating glory with which I saw her surrounded, I must confess, contributes to render her still more interesting in my estimation. Before this day, I was sufficiently convinced of her merit; yet we feel the value of virtue with greater force, after having enjoyed the happiness of seeing it crowned. At these words Oliver sighed, and, after a moment's silence, "Yes," said he, "the spectacle, to which we have been witness, cannot but leave a deep impression upon our minds." On saying this, he arose in an absent manner, drew nearer to the duchess, an instant afterwards changed his place, and at length went out of the room.

## CHAPTER XXII.

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A QUEEN WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING, AND  
ILL-ADVISED.

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L'Anglois indépendant et libre autant que brave,  
Des caprices de cour ne fut jamais esclave,  
Nous ne l'avons point vu régler, jusqu'à ce jour,  
Sur la faveur des rois, sa haine ou son amour.  
Contre un tel préjugé, son ame est aguerrie,  
Souvent contre le trône il défend la patrie.

*Warwick. Tragédie de MR. DE LA HARPE.*

THIS day, which was so glorious for the duchess of Cleves, increased both the love and admiration of Isambard. He observed, with secret delight, that the princess treated his two rivals, Theudon, and the bashful Guichard, with studied and distant politeness, while her behaviour to the other knights, and particularly to himself, was less reserved, and full of courtesy. Already he began to discover, that he had incurred the hatred of the king of Pannonia; he attributed his sudden aversion to jealousy; and, by degrees, his heart prompted him to encourage the most endearing hope. Beatrice was seated between Amalberga and Delia; Isambard, Lancelot, Angilbert, Archambald, and some other knights, formed a half-circle, just opposite those three persons. Angilbert had just been reading a copy of verses, which he had composed for Beatrice; but, all on a sudden, the  
princess,

princess, falling into a deep reverie, took no farther part in the conversation. In a few minutes, however, she resumed her discourse, and, changing the topic, spoke of the court of France, and asked Ifambard many questions on that subject. She then enquired of him, if he really observed that striking resemblance between her and the unhappy daughter of Witikind, which the French knights, and Oger the Dane, reported. This question, though very natural, surpris'd Ifambard, and gave him an uneasiness, for which he was at a loss to account; he replied, that the likeness was indeed extraordinary. Upon this, Beatrice asked a multitude of questions respecting Celanira; and, entering into the minutest particulars concerning her, she was desirous of knowing in what manner she was dress'd on her first appearance at court; she was told, that the princess for some time wore the dress of her country; and the dukes request'd an exact description of the Saxon garb; at this moment, Oliver enter'd the room; and Beatrice immediately began to talk on another subject. Oliver, according to his custom, plac'd himself in a remote corner of the saloon; he rarely came near the dukes, and never address'd his conversation to her. She, on her part, spok'e but little to him, and seem'd to lament and respect his deep melancholy. The French knights had question'd Ifambard upon the grief of his friend. Ifambard ascribed it to his rupture with Armoslede; he had even spoken of it to Oger the Dane, and censur'd his attachment to so contemptible an object; but Oger, quite deluded, and more in love than ever, being at length perswaded beyond all doubt, that his Aminta was Armoslede, consider'd that all her crime

crime was having sacrificed Oliver to him; and he easily overlooked an error which was so flattering to himself. This idea gave him no small embarrassment respecting Oliver; and the latter, knowing him to be enamoured with Armosede, conceived a sort of dislike to him, and carefully avoided his presence—a circumstance which served to confirm Oger in his mistake.

The conversation became general in the saloon, Oliver alone, of all the company, being retired to the farther end of the room, where he sat indulging his sorrow, taking no part in it; when the sound of a horn announced the arrival of a new knight; and in a few minutes after appeared the valiant Astolphus, the renowned English Paladin (39), with whose reputation all our knights had been long acquainted, and whom Oliver had frequently met in his travels. After the first compliments were over, the company asked the English knight many questions respecting the present situation of his country. Beatrice was desirous of knowing the particulars of the revolution which had placed Egbert upon the throne, in opposition to the rights and the powerful party of queen Eadburga; and Astolphus thus gratified the princess's curiosity.

“The pretensions of queen Eadburga, were in fact much better founded than those of Egbert; but the throne is a possession, the inheritance of which can only be secured by the love of the people. The beginning of Eadburga's reign seemed to promise much felicity; her tender youth, an agreeable person, and engaging manners, at first captivated every heart. Her mind was endowed with sensibility; her early ambition was to form an agreeable and confidential  
society



society about her person, and to acquire true friends— But unhappily she was deficient both in sense and experience; she made a bad choice; and a disposition, of all others the most adapted to extend information and improve reason, served, in this case, only to lead her astray, and corrupt her. She loved at first with an engaging sincerity; and she was less proud of her rank, than of the glory of having secured the attachment of friends whom she considered faithful. Full of courtesy and delicate attention, she placed all her happiness in preventing their desires, and loading them with favours. But so much generosity produced only ingratitude, and could never satisfy the insatiate ambition of her favourites. They were in general too unprincipled to promote the glory of the queen; and the levity of their own conduct made them even desirous that she should show herself above, what they called, prejudice. It was indeed no difficult task to corrupt a young, a lively, and tender-hearted princess, of inferior understanding, and whose confidence they entirely possessed. They were able to induce her, on the most frivolous motives of pleasure or vanity, to break through the severe rules of etiquette, which sovereigns ought not to dispense with in public, but occasionally, in order to gain popularity. But the queen, without showing any unusual degree of goodness or affability towards the people, continued daily to act in a rash and inconsiderate manner; and she insensibly lost all dignity of character and personal consideration. The favourites were not loved by the nation; and they taught the queen to hold the people in disdain. She manifested her sentiments; she was soon universally disliked, and  
received

received convincing proofs of her subjects aversion.— Then, instead of endeavouring to recover the goodwill of the nation, she gave herself up entirely to the most violent resentment; and, thinking that a little circle of flatterers sufficed for her glory, she ventured to brave the public opinion; she had no longer any regard to her conduct, or put any restraint upon her passions. She professed such contempt for decorum, that her court even, the most corrupt in all Europe, was scandalized at it \*. The favourites made some slight remonstrances; but this served only to lessen them in her estimation. This unhappy princess, who had so long been led astray by flattery and dissipation, was no longer capable of listening to the voice of reason. At length, running on head long to ruin, her conduct became so scandalous, that her effrontery seemed opprobrious in the eyes of the most contemptible and depraved. The favourites all kept their places, but protested they had lost all influence upon her mind; that they were no longer consulted by her; and, as a proof of this, they openly censured her proceedings, and strove which should most loudly reprobate her character and moral conduct. The queen, now convinced of the insincerity of her friends, sought for consolation in new follies. Discouraged, and

\* We must suppose that Astolphus here speaks in general terms, and that he allows of exceptions. And I must add, that my historical inquiries have furnished me with proof, that in this frivolous and licentious court there were many enlightened and virtuous characters, and that such were even to be found among those who successively shared the favour of the queen. But people of that description were not listened to.

totally corrupted, her mind no longer gave reception to soft and tender sentiments, but abandoned itself, without restraint, to hatred and vengeance; and her ruin was now complete. About this period, the revolution began; every one knows the history of it; and I shall only touch upon such particulars as relate to the queen. The people were desirous of seeing a reform of abuses; the ambition and avidity of the courtiers counteracted measures which would lead to the sacrifice of their own interests. The queen, accustomed to despise the people, was blind to the danger which threatened her. She showed the greatest unconcern; and the multitude ascribed to courage, what only arose from ignorance. In the mean while, the people, who had risen in arms, obtained a victory; and prince Egbert was on the point of mounting the throne, when Eadburga, yielding to necessity, at last promised to subscribe to the stipulated conditions; the indulgent nation forgot her errors, replaced the crown upon her head, and prince Egbert was forced to seek an asylum at the court of Charlemagne. The nation, in having restored Eadburga to her former condition, had acted with equal generosity and sincerity; but the courtiers, who hated the revolution, flattered themselves, that the queen might yet secure the success of their wild projects. With this view, they endeavoured to foment her resentment for the injuries she had received; they persuaded her, she had still a powerful party; that all Europe had their eyes upon her, and that she would acquire immortal glory, could she attain to the recovery of those rights which she had solemnly abjured. They continually repeated, that they

they expected every thing from her firmness and courage; and the queen, infatuated with this flattery, and passionately desirous of vengeance, adopted all the extravagant measures which were proposed to her.— Then the courtiers applauded, in the highest terms of panegyric, her understanding, her greatness of soul; and the unhappy princess, while she was acting the most imprudent and cowardly part, considered herself a heroine. What, indeed, could be more imprudent, than to surround herself with a crowd of people whose aversion to the revolution was notorious? and what could be less courageous, than to repeat, in all her public speeches, the assurance of her sincerity, and of her attachment to the new laws? The more so, as nothing obliged her to make these public harangues, and that she had recourse to them, without their being either solicited or desired. This duplicity, together with her indiscretion, and the imprudence of her pretended friends, revived the hatred and contempt of the nation. Her secret intrigues were discovered; and many were imputed to her which probably never existed; but the people, being convinced that the queen was implacable and insincere, at last decided irrevocably in favour of Egbert. That prince was recalled, and received with transport; his reputation for gentleness, integrity, and goodness, gave encouragement to those even who had shown themselves the most averse to his cause. His first step was publicly to take a solemn oath to forget for ever all personal injuries; and indeed his noble and open conduct removed every uneasiness in that regard. In the mean while, the people, exasperated against the queen, would have pro-



proceeded to violent measures, had not her successour been determined to save her from their fury. He charged me to escort her out of the kingdom, together with all her treasures; he himself traced out the road we should take, and told me, that, as soon as we had crossed the sea, I was to conduct her to whatever place she should choose for her residence on the continent.— As I took an occasion to praise the generosity of the king towards Eadburga, who had been accused of conspiring several times against his life: ‘Humanity alone,’ replied Egbert, ‘would prescribe such conduct; but even sound policy requires it. Misfortune corrects none but superiour minds; it confirms the degradation of base ones. I know the queen; I am certain, that, wherever her asylum may be, her conduct will justify, in the eyes of all Europe, the measures of the English nation. Let her live, and the partisans who are still attached to her cause will soon be forced to despise her: whereas, were she to fall the victim of popular fury, the recollection of her whole life would be lost in that of her tragical end; compassion would succeed to the hatred she now inspires; she would leave behind her an interesting memory; and the enemies of the revolution would make her a heroine.’ I acquiesced in the justice of these reflections; and I admired that happy union of policy and virtue in Egbert’s conduct, which, indeed, is only to be found in great minds, and superiour understandings. According to the king’s order, I accompanied Eadburga in her flight, and crossed the sea with her. The princess was desirous of residing at that famous court, in which the prince who had just driven her from her country had himself formerly

found an asylum. The reputation of Charlemagne had induced her to make this choice. The emperor considered Eadburga only as an unfortunate queen, to whom he owed support; and he thought, with great justice, that Egbert himself would be gratified to hear, that, under such circumstances, he had given reception to his rival and his enemy. I left Eadburga at Aix-la-Chapelle (40); and, having heard of the unjust enterprise of the confederated princes against the duchess of Cleves, I am come to offer her my arm and my services."

THE KNIGHTS OF  
CHAPTER XXIII.

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THE CONFIDENCES.

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Le cœur a des secrets que l'esprit ne fait pas.

LA CHAUSÉE.

THE narration of Astolphus, the paladin, gave occasion to a general conversation, which lasted till supper-time. Astolphus placed himself at table by the side of Oliver, and requested him to be favoured with a private interview. The next day, Oliver retired to his chamber at noon, and the English knight told him, in confidence, that the principal motive of his journey was to solicit the hand of Beatrice for the king of England. "That prince," added he, "during his exile, passed through this country. Being quite unknown, and lost in the crowd, he only saw the duchess a single time at a public festival. She was then but fifteen years old; her father was still living; but she made an indelible impression upon the heart of Egbert; and he now lays at her feet the throne he has gained by his valour and his virtues." After mentioning these particulars, Astolphus added, that he wished to obtain a private audience with Beatrice, to deliver his mission. Oliver replied, that the princess never granted any upon political affairs since the persecutions she had suffered; that, having the different humours and pretensions of her defenders to manage, she carefully shunned every thing which might inspire them with suspicion, or give them umbrage;

brage; and that every kind of negotiation was transacted in public. This information greatly embarrassed Astolphus, who, knowing the aversion Beatrice had to marriage, was unwilling to receive a public refusal.—After some reflection, he intreated Oliver to sound her inclinations, and to praise the personal qualities of Egbert, whom he had known. “Every thing I could urge in that respect,” continued he, “would appear suspicious on my part, but could not be so on yours.” Oliver positively refused to be the bearer of this commission; and, at the repeated instance of Astolphus, he at length proposed to speak to Isambard on the subject, who, as well as himself, was acquainted with the king of England: and to this measure Astolphus consented. Oliver was led by two motives to make this refusal; the embarrassment of a tête-à-tête with Beatrice, and the scruple of making her a proposal, the success of which would afflict Isambard; the latter, it is true, had of late left off speaking to him of his passion for Beatrice. Oliver easily discerned, that the striking likeness of that princess to Celanira checked all his confidence on that point, and created an embarrassment which his reason could not overcome. But, persuaded that he adored the princess, and fancying he had perceived she had an inclination for him, he thought it his duty to inform him of this new event; and he immediately repaired to him to relate it. Isambard listened with much emotion; and, after having thanked him, said: “Well, my dear friend, if there exist a man on earth worthy of Beatrice, it is doubtlessly this prince; and the proposal must be communicated to her, as Astolphus desires.” “Then,” returned Oliver,



“thou wilt charge thyself with it.”--“No,” replied Ifambard, “I must confess, I should do it with an ill grace, and betray my own feelings. But I intreat thee to request this private interview, and to urge, in favour of Egbert, all that truth and justice can prompt, and afterwards to give me an exact, and even minute account of every thing she said upon this occasion.”

When the company sat down to dinner, Oliver approached the duchess; and was so near to her, that she asked him, for the first time, to sit down by her. Oliver spoke but little, scarcely partook of the repast, and, during the whole meal, had not sufficient resolution to venture to make the request he had intended. Every time he determined upon it, he felt a violent fluttering at his heart, and his words expired upon his lips. At last, at the instant of leaving the table, Beatrice turning towards him, he cast down his eyes and blushed and then stammered out, “Madam, may I venture to intreat you to grant me a moment’s audience to-day?” Beatrice made a movement of surprise, but immediately replied, “Yes, this evening, at six, in my closet.”

The company returned to the saloon. Beatrice appeared thoughtful; and quite lost in reflection.— Oliver retired to Ifambard’s chamber, to wait the appointed hour of rendezvous. Ifambard, regaining his former confidence in Oliver, laid open his heart before him, and declared all his amorous disquietudes; but he still persisted in his generosity, and strongly recommended to his friend, to speak of the king of England after his own conscience, and with perfect regard to truth. Some minutes before six, Oliver repaired to the princess’s apartment. As he went through the suite of  
rooms

rooms which led to her cabinet; a recollection, at the same time delicious yet full of bitterness, was revived in his imagination; the hour, the disposition of the rooms, their furniture, the agitation of his mind, all recalled his first private interview with Celanira, in the palace of Charlemagne, when Emma sent him into her closet, where Celanira expected him. The idea that the personal resemblance, and the like sound of voice of Beatrice, was about to increase the illusion, completed his distress. At length, he arrived at the door of the cabinet—it was half opened—he stopped short—At this moment, a voice, which reached to the bottom of his soul, gently called to him, and bade him come in. It was the first time the princess, in speaking to him, called him by his name; and the manner in which she pronounced these two words, "*Come, Oliver,*" had something so touching in it, that his eyes overflowed with tears.—Oliver, notwithstanding the infirm state of his health, and his excessive paleness, was still remarkable for the graces of his person. His eyes, full of fire and sentiment, expressed all he felt within him; and, in his manner, his gesture, and the tone of his voice, there was a native gracefulness, which inspired interest, and captivated the attention. Beatrice, on perceiving him, arose from her seat; and, casting her eyes upon him, she was so struck at the expression of his countenance, that she remained several minutes without sitting down. At last, she resumed her seat, and pointing to a chair which was beside her, Oliver sat down, but did not utter a word. The duchess was placed in such a light as obscured part of her countenance, and disguised the colour of her hair and eyes; the form of her face was

sufficiently visible, and she was dressed in white.— Oliver recollected, that this was Celanira's usual dress; and never before did the resemblance appear to him so exact. His embarrassment and emotion were equally distressing. What would the duchess think of his silence and his looks? Yet he was unable to speak; an insurmountable oppression of mind deprived him of all power of utterance; and, besides, he could not well recollect what he had to impart: the constraint he was under, and his perplexity, are not to be described. After some minutes passed in this manner, Beatrice broke silence: "Well, Oliver," said she, "what have you to say to me?"—"Ah, Madam!" returned the wretched knight.—He could not proceed, but burst into tears; then, covering his face with his hands, he was going to retire.—The duchess held him, saying, in broken accents, "Stay—you must stay."—Oliver, more affected than ever, remained motionless—his tears ceased to flow—a sensation, he could not define, now suspended and dissipated his embarrassment. He looked at the duchess; and, for the first time, he found her as beautiful and interesting as Celanira herself; she was weeping—"O heavens!" cried he.—He dared not say more; but, all painful recollection being for a moment removed, he saw but only her, and contemplated her with rapture. "Hear me, Oliver," returned the duchess, "I am going, I believe, to spare you an embarrassing confession; I have discovered your secret; and I am well acquainted with it. I know that a striking resemblance calls to your memory a most afflicting scene—I pity you from the bottom of my heart—I grieve at this singular likeness which afflicts you; but,

but, in the name of heaven, let not the illusion deprive me of such a champion;—and if you be come to take your leave”—“Leave, madam, what I,” interrupted Oliver with vehemence, “I quit you, while my arm can serve you?—Ah! to shed my blood in your defence, to die for you, such henceforth shall be the only glory of which I can be ambitious!”—“You dispel my fears,” replied the duchess, “I had imagined you intended to leave me.” Oliver sighed, and made no reply. He distrusted his own heart, and ventured not even to speak. After a moment’s silence; “I will tell you,” said the duchess, “how I divined your sentiments. Long before your arrival, Angilbert and Lancelot had spoken to me of this resemblance, which causes so much pain, and they had related the tragical end of the unfortunate Celanira, and in what manner you exposed your life to save hers.” Here Oliver shuddered. These words destroyed the enchantment which had been affording him a momentary reprieve;—and the duchess resuming her discourse; “this fatal story,” continued she, “deeply interested me. I imagined, that among the great number of knights which compose the court of Charlemagne, it was impossible but that some of them must have loved a person of such extraordinary worth and beauty. I imagined, that if any one of those knights came here, I should discover his sentiments by the distress my presence would give him. Oger, the Dane, arrived here three weeks before you; he informed me, the Knights of the Swan would soon follow him; the celebrated name of Oliver recalled to my mind that of the interesting and unhappy Celanira.—I asked several ques-



tions—Oger told me you were plunged into the deepest melancholy, and that a black crape covered your shield; from that moment I suspected the truth.—I waited your arrival with extreme curiosity.—When you appeared, I recognized you at a distance—for I had received an exact description of your face and person.—I never shall forget the expression of your countenance at that first moment of surprise and emotion.—I was more affected at it than I am well able to describe.”—On saying this the duchess left off speaking—and the tears of Oliver began to flow afresh. “I will not deny,” madam, returned he, “what you have discovered; it is true, I adore her.—I shall carry with me to the grave this fatal passion!—Ah! can any thing short of eternal regret be felt for one who so perfectly resembled you?”—The duchess made no reply, and a long silence ensued. At last Beatrice, starting from her reverie, said; “I only entered into this explanation, to remove the distressing embarrassment I always occasion you; I am but too well aware, that nothing can console you; but I was desirous to rid you at least of the torment of constraint; I have thought too, that the illusion of this resemblance would be less distressing to you, when you had no longer any apprehensions of exciting my astonishment by inexplicable behaviour. As to your secret, I need not tell you that you may depend on my discretion; or shall I ever renew the painful subject, but I shall consider myself honoured by the confidence you have placed in me; and my heart, from the concern it takes in your sorrow, is, I trust, worthy of that confidence. Now, Oliver, inform me of the occasion of  
your

your visit." Oliver was so deeply affected, that he was obliged to collect himself for some minutes, in order to be able to make reply; at length, he entered into the particulars of his mission, and launched out into the highest praise of Egbert. The duchess heard him without making any interruption, and when he had left off speaking, "How old is the king of England?" said she. This question, which seemed to be the prelude to some sort of deliberation, made Oliver blush: "I believe, madam," replied he, "that the prince is about my own age, and I am twenty-eight."—"Oliver, what would you advise me to do?"—"I think, with Isambard, that if there exist in the universe a man, who may reasonably have pretensions to the hand of the duchess of Cleves, it is the king of England."—"But is not having pretensions to my hand, likewise having pretensions to my heart?"—"Policy, reason, and glory, madam, are the usual motives of an alliance with persons of your rank."—"You place me then in the class of all other princesses?"—"I, great God, who can only compare you with one sole object!"—Here Oliver stopped and blushed again.—"Well," returned the princess, "I must tell you, Oliver, that, if I form the engagement you propose, I shall consult my heart only. For the interest of my subjects I could, indeed, quit the spot which gave me birth, but ambition will never be able to induce me to abandon my country. You may communicate this answer to the english knight." At these words Oliver arose, made a low bow, and withdrew. Full of perplexity and agitation of mind, he was averse to reflect upon this conversation, and to enter into an

examination of his own sentiments. He made a strong resolution to shun, with the greatest care, every opportunity of seeing the duchess in private, and determined never to allow his thoughts to dwell upon the recollection of this dangerous interview. He announced to Isambard, and the english knight, the refusal of Beatrice; and this refusal, which was of so positive a nature, tended still farther to encourage the hopes of his friend.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

NOTES

## N O T E S

TO THE

## SECOND VOLUME.

(1) Oger, the Dane, lived under the reign of Charlemagne. The authors of the dictionary of illustrious men say, that, after having signalized himself by many warlike exploits, he retired to a solitude, and there ended his days in ease and obscurity. It is not well known, says Mr. Gaillard, whence Oger received the surname of the Dane; whether he was thus named because he was born in Denmark, or whether it was a title of glory, in attestation of his victories, and that he was called *the Dane* as Scipio was named the African, and Metellus the Numidian. As to the retreat of Oger to the court of the king of the Lombards, it appears to have some foundation in history; the particulars of it may be seen in Mr. Gaillard's Life of Charlemagne, volume the last.

(2) In the old historical romance, entitled *Oger the Dane*, it is said, that this hero, combating under Didier, king of the Lombards, met with Charlemagne in the midst of the battle, without knowing him; that he attacked and overthrew him; and having at length discovered who he was, assisted him to get upon his



legs and to mount his horse. Several other ancient romance writers likewise agree in giving Oger the glory of having saved the life of Charlemagne.

(3) So striking is the conformity between certain parts of the history of Oger and the events of the present times, that it might be thought I had violated historical truth; I never made in my life, however, a false quotation; and among the numerous fatires that have been written upon my works, such conduct has never been laid to my charge. But, in order to verify the singular citations contained in these notes, I shall indicate the volume and the page of the book whence I take them; and I shall, after the manner of the extract relative to Charlemagne, copy Mr. Gaillard literally:

“Sigefroy, king of the Normans, was the friend of Witikind; his court was the retreat of the Saxon general under all his misfortunes: and the dominions of Sigefroy served as an asylum for all the Saxons driven out of their country:” *vol. 2, page 271.*  
 “Godefroy, successor to Sigefroy, adopted the same policy:” *vol. 2, page 272.*

It is a singular circumstance, that, in a parliament convened at Worms, Charlemagne caused war to be proclaimed against the Saxons because they wished to be free; and it is known that it was at Worms, and for the same reason, where the intrigues began, which finally created the coalition and the war against France.

(4) We know that the people of these times celebrated their warlike exploits in military songs: the French had their songs of Rowland and Oliver\*; the Saxons had their bards or poets, who accompanied them in war, and sung during the fight: they were surrounded with a body of troops, in order that the enemy should not lay hold of them. Charlemagne caused a collection to be made of all the works of the Saxon bards, but what became of that collection is not known. It cannot be doubted, that the Saxons had hymns in honour of the great Arminius, since we know they made a god of him; “for,” says Mr. Gaillard, “the most rational opinion respecting their famous idol Irminful is, that it represented the celebrated Arminius, who was deified by that free people for having defended the Germanic liberty against the tyranny of Rome:” *vol. 2, page 219, and the sequel.* The Saxon republicans sung their hymns to liberty in the dominions of Sigefroy, and the French at the present day have permission to sing their *hymne marseilloise* in the same country. What produces this tolerance?—the great confidence the nation has in the government which manifests such noble unconcern,

\* The remembrance of the exploits of these two heroes was a long time preserved in the military songs which the soldiers chanted before the battle. This custom prevailed under all the second race of kings, and very much under the third. On the day of the battle of Poitiers, king John, hearing some soldiers singing the song of Rowland and Oliver, exclaimed peevishly—*’Tis a long while since any Rowlands have appeared among the French.* An old soldier, hurt at this reproach, boldly replied—*’Tis because they have no longer a Charlemagne to lead them.*

and

and which would not have possessed it, without the just right it has acquired to the love and gratitude of the people.

(5) "In these warlike expeditions," says Mr. Gaillard, "the Saxons massacred all who came in their way, without distinction of sex or age. They murdered the women, they burned the children in their cradles, the aged and infirm in their beds, &c." *vol. 2, page 236*. Horrid cruelties! but they were committed by an ignorant and barbarous people, and in the eighth century; and our age has produced crimes still more atrocious. The atrocious acts committed at Paris, Lyons, Nantz, and in so many other places, surpass in barbarity every thing that history hands down to us of that nature.

(6) "Godefroy, king of Denmark, had cherished the sentiments he had imbibed from Witikind, his friend, and the friend of Sigefroy, his predecessor; and although Witikind submitted, and became the disciple and friend of Charlemagne, Godefroy had not, like him, altered his opinion:" *vol. 2, page 362*.

Oger, in the course of his narrative, says, that Witikind at last became suspected by the Saxons; and we likewise learn from history, that Charlemagne availed himself of the jealousy which the glory of Witikind and Albion excited among the other chiefs, to draw the former over to his party. He addressed himself directly to Witikind and Albion, his illustrious enemies; he undertook to change their hearts, to disarm their hatred by the most noble procedure; and

he treated with them as a great man treats with brave people, whom he has had the glory to conquer. He lavished upon them those attentions and those honours which alone can satisfy great minds. He taught them to feel the gratifications of civil life, the charms of peace, the holiness of christianity, which tends to make of all mankind a people of brothers. At length Witikind and Albion came to join him in the heart of his dominions, where they received baptism, together with a crowd of Saxons whom they brought in their suite; to all of these they afforded the example of sincerely embracing christianity, and remaining continually attached to it: *vol. 2, page 258*. The Saxons, however, after that period, were in constant rebellion; and it was not before the year 804 that Charlemagne was able to extirpate that war, by a general transplantation of Saxons, executed under his own inspection, by his victorious army; the whole force and violence of which were hardly sufficient to tear these unhappy people from a country, which they considered as the only real asylum of liberty. Flanders and Brabant were at that time almost entirely covered with forests; ten thousand Saxon families were transplanted thither, and employed in clearing away the ground. It is pretended, that the ruling passion of the Saxons, their love of independency and freedom, communicated by them to the natives, turned out afterwards the principle of so many rebellions among the Flemings against their sovereigns \*; and it was a common pro-

\* It was highly just that such an act of despotism should become fatal to despotism itself; and we may discover this lesson of providence in the history of every conqueror and every despot.



verb in the time of Philip the Fair and Philip of Valois, that Charlemagne, in having blended the Saxons with the Flemings, *of one devil had made two*. "And why," cries the impartial historian of Charlemagne—"why exterminate and transplant a nation to conquer a desert, beyond the confines of which war and hatred were still to be found?" *vol. 2, page 268, and the sequel.*

(7) As tournaments appeared to me necessary in a romance of chivalry, I have introduced several into this work, but I have anticipated a little the period of their institution; for no mention is made of tournaments in history before the reign of Charles the Bald. Foreigners attribute this invention to the French, except the Germans, who lay claim to it themselves. The first French author who mentions the tournaments is Nithard, the grandson of Charlemagne. He only speaks of them under the reign of Charles the Bald; and he describes such combats, but does not name them. It is only since Geoffrey de Preuilli, who died in 1066, and who is considered as the inventor of tournaments, that the word tournament appears in books. The principal regulations of these festivals, called *schools of prowess*, consist in not striking with the point but with the edge of the sword; not to strike a knight after he had taken off the visor from his helmet; and the peace-officer, who was chosen by the ladies, was always at hand to interpose his pacific ministration, whenever a knight, through inadvertency, had violated the laws of the combat. This peace-officer, called, likewise, the champion of

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the ladies, armed with a long lance with a cap at the end of it, no sooner lowered upon the helmet of the knight the sign of the clemency and safeguard of the ladies, than the offender was screened from harm: he was absolved from his fault, when it was considered in any degree involuntary; but if it appeared clear that he had committed it on purpose, he was condemned to expiate it by rigorous punishment. These warlike games always closed by what was called *the stroke, or the lance, of the ladies*; and this homage was repeated in combating for them with the sword, the battle-axe, and the dagger. [See *Mémoires sur l'ancienne Chevalerie*, par Mr. de Ste. Palaye.]

(8) This Meinrad actually lived under the reign of Charlemagne: he was the founder of the noble monastery of Einsiedlin in Switzerland; a monastery celebrated for the magnificence of its buildings, and the number of pilgrims who have resorted thither without interruption for more than five hundred years past \*. Meinrad's father was named Bertold, and was of the family of the counts of Hohenzollern: he was born in a city of Swabia, called Sulfen. He turned hermit, retired upon mount Etnel, and there built himself a dwelling of branches of trees. A devout widow of Altendorf found him out, and built him a cell and a chapel. This solitude became very celebrated; the saint was wearied with visits; and, in order to get rid of them, he retired into the midst of a forest, near the spot where the monastery of Einsiedlin now stands.

\* This monastery is near Zurich.

The abbess of a neighbouring convent became, like the widow of Altendorf, his friend and benefactress: she built him a cell and a chapel, to which he gave the name of *the chapel of our lady*, which it bears to this day. Meinrad had passed seven years in his first hermitage, in this he lived thirty-two, at the end of which he was assassinated by robbers. Two crows he had reared pursued the villains, and set upon them with so much fury, that they were quickly discovered, for it was well known that the saint had fed crows; on this indication they were taken up, and they confessed their crime. I found these particulars in a book in one large volume, entitled, *The Chronicle of the Monastery of Einsiedlin*. As to Gerold, I read in the same book, that a german prince of this name, convinced of the folly of human grandeur, was one of Meinrad's successors in this hermitage. If I have ventured to represent the pious Meinrad in love, it is a licence authorised by the manners of past ages \*, for in those days scarce any other remedy was known for an unhappy attachment than to turn hermit or monk. In renouncing the object of affection, it cost but little to renounce every thing else: they knew how to love, and great sacrifices naturally arise from great sentiments. I must further observe, that, agree-

\* It is well known, that the discourse and conduct of the ancient knights display an odd mixture of devotion and gallantry. The first lessons they received related principally to *the love of God and the ladies*; and, according to the chronicle of Jean de Saintré, it was commonly the ladies, who undertook to teach young people, at one and the same time, their catechism and the art of love.

ably to the manners of the times, a faint in love is not an unfuitable personage for a romance of knight-errantry; religion, besides, imparts a sublime character and an engaging interest to the passions, whenever she combats and triumphs over them without working their destruction.

(9) Witikind had, in fact, a son named Diaulas. The romance writers have made him act a conspicuous part: they ascribe many exploits to him; but in a battle he proposed to fight Charlemagne in duel, the challenge was accepted, and Diaulas vanquished. History only observes, that Diaulas combated valiantly for liberty under the command of his father; but does not afterwards mention what became of him. When Witikind made an alliance with Charlemagne, it does not appear that Diaulas followed his example; I therefore can suppose, with more likelihood, that he remained among the Saxons, for it appears by history that in fact he did so.

(10) In the history of Charlemagne is found a person of the name of Rotbold, who was celebrated for his vices and ferocity, and who entered into a conspiracy against the emperor.

(11) Whenever a knight was going to combat for a lady, he was armed by her, and she likewise gave him what was called *faveur*, *joyau*, *nobley*, or *enseigne*; this was a scarf, a veil, a cap, a bracelet, a lock of hair, or, in one word, something which was taken from her dress, and occasionally a work wrought with  
her



her own hands, with which the favoured knight decked the top of his helmet, or his lance, or his coat of arms. When a knight set off upon an expedition in favour of a lady, he received at her hands chains of gold, with which he ornamented his shield: and when he went to fight for her, he begged her to give him what was then called *the word of combat, the word of battle*; it was a sentence which varied according to circumstances, and the pleasure of the ladies; and during the combat the knight did not fail to repeat, with a loud voice, the words the lady had dictated. When he came off conqueror, the victory was proclaimed by heralds, accompanied with music. The formulary of acclamation was by no means uniform: one of the most usual was the following—*Honour to the sons of the valiant*; at other times was cried—*Love to the ladies, death to heroes*. At tilting matches, where the danger was not so great as at tournaments, the herald only proclaimed—*Love to the ladies, death to horses*. But a thousand piercing cries re-echoed the victor's name; a custom which formed the word *renommée*, *renown*, as likewise the word *grido* with the Italians, who say, *un cavaliere di gran grido*, to signify a man of high reputation.

Several days before the celebration of a tournament, all the armorial shields of such as were candidates for the lists were suspended in a place erected on purpose, that they might be exposed to the inspection of the dames and damsels. An herald, or pursuivant at arms, informed the ladies to whom they belonged; and if among these candidates was found any one who had given a lady cause of complaint, she touched the crest, or shield, of his armour; the judges then made proper

per inquiry, and if the complaint of the lady were well-founded, the knight was excluded from the tournament. It was sufficient for her to prove, that the knight had spoken ill of her, for the laws of chivalry expressly forbade *slandering the ladies*. When I represented Oliver, in the first volume, flying to the succour of Zemni and his mother, without knowing them; when I represent a multitude of knights assembled together, and disputing for the glory of defending an oppressed woman, I exactly describe the manners of the time. The greater part of the laws of chivalry, says Mr. de Ste. Palaye (from whom I have taken what has been just read), might have been adopted by the wisest legislators and most virtuous philosophers of all nations and ages: in virtue of these laws, widows and orphans, and men in *indigent circumstances*, and *unprotected*, all who groaned under injustice and oppression, were entitled to claim the protection of a knight, and to require in his defence not only the succour of his arm, but the sacrifice of his blood and life. To throw off such obligation was breaking a sacred duty, and incurring dishonour for the rest of his days. With so much generosity, it is not surprising that the feeble and defenceless sex should be treated with such respect and attention, and that the honour of risking their lives in their service should prove a matter of contention among the knights. The assistance, however, which was due to a brother in arms, was a stronger obligation than that to which the ladies were entitled: "a damsel," says Mr. de Ste. Palaye, "having in vain solicited the protection of a knight, the latter exculpated himself by proving, that he was  
then

then under the necessity of flying to the succour of his brother in arms." See *Mémoires de l'ancienne Chevalerie*.

(12) It is very remarkable, that, in general, all the leaders of popular revolutions have neither been men of great talents nor genius: Rienzi, in Italy; Cromwel, in England; the execrable Robespierre in France, and so many others, are proofs of it. Superiour talents always excite the hatred of the ordinary and contracted minds which form the multitude. Furthermore, the ascendancy of a man of genius is always dreaded, and artful designs and ambitious views are readily imputed to him: it is easily believed, that the man whom nature has eminently exalted above others should have pretensions to the highest rank in society; his speeches are applauded, but they excite suspicion; leagues are formed against him, his successes are calumniated, he becomes suspected, he is repulsed and lost in the public opinion; whilst the man of moderate abilities, if he be of an intriguing disposition, and possess a great fund of hypocrisy, much suppleness, and perseverance, is sure of attaining his end, and succeeding at least for a season.

(13) If decrees of the national assembly had not solemnly adopted the manners and language of quakers in France, the nation would never have supported the tyranny of Robespierre two months. But that infamous despot wore neither sceptre nor crown; every one was allowed to thee and thou him: he spoke of nothing but the *sovereignty of the people*; and who could

could imagine him to be a tyrant? In order *to be elevated to the height of circumstances*, it was necessary then to believe that dignity and politeness were incompatible with liberty; and, according to Robespierre and his accomplices, the definition of a true republican was reduced to these four words—*vulgar, impious, implacable, and sanguinary*.

Diaulas upbraids the Saxon chiefs with having flattered the people; the reproach may be revived in our own days. Much has been said against the flattery of courts, and with great reason; but there, at least, it had its bounds, and popular flattery has none. A sovereign, however vain he might be of his rank and power, is always enlightened and reasonable enough to reject extravagant adulation. Lewis the fourteenth blushed on hearing that the french academy proposed, as the prize of eloquence, this question: *Which of the virtues of the king merits the preference?* The monarch was disgusted at the flattery, and prohibited the discussion of the subject. The crimes of despots have often been born in silence, but, at least, no apologies were made for crimes\*. How have the popular chiefs harrangued the people upon the burning of castles; the massacres of the third of September; upon plundering, and, in fine, upon all the excesses that have been committed! They contented themselves with saying, *the people had been led astray*; and never failed to add, that the people, whatever they

\* I am not ignorant that a weak and sanguinary priest made the apology of the murder committed by a duke of Burgundy; but an insulated fact, and relative to a single person, proves nothing.



had committed, are *always good, always just*: in them the most abominable cruelty was only an *excusable error*; *they had been deceived, their credulity had been imposed upon*. To what tyrants have the basest flatterers ever dared to hold such language? The courtiers who flatter a king are certainly very culpable; but, after all, they corrupt but a single man; and if that man become a tyrant, he may be deposed; but the flatterers of the people corrupt the whole nation together:—and what a crime is that! A king, however defective his education might have been, has yet derived some benefit from it; he has a general idea of history perhaps; and, if fond of reading, he might possess as much or more acquired knowledge than those who are about him. It is often impossible, and, at least, always very difficult, to lead him astray by persuading him that a bad action is an act of heroism, and consecrated by the example of the greatest men, and the admiration of every age \*. He never can be persuaded, for instance, that there are cases in which murder and assassination are sublime actions; if he be instigated to the commission of a crime, at least, he will be aware, that it is a crime he is advised to commit. But the people being totally ignorant, it is easy to

\* I allow that the robberies of Alexander, called the Great, have been too long the subject of admiration; but the political abuses of conquest have, for more than a century past, been acknowledged, as well as their odiousness, in a moral view. Telemachus was written in the last century: this immortal book is in the hands of every prince; and certainly no work since has displayed, with so much force and eloquence, all that reason and humanity have to urge against the spirit of conquest and war.

falsify history in order to lead them astray, and this has been often done: the second Brutus assassinating his father is incessantly held out to them as a perfect model of virtue; but they have not been told that, among the ancients even, all truly virtuous men have blamed that atrocious deed \*. They have been told, that the Romans abolished royalty, that Tarquin was dethroned; but they have not heard, that the Romans expelled him without injury, and that they restored to him all his wealth; and that wealth was immense. What a wretched lecture upon history have the people of Paris heard from the tribune of the Jacobins, especially for the last three years! The orators, in a style worthy of the maxims they profess, select from history only such facts as degrade it, and never bring forward a single virtuous action. When it was represented to the people, that their interest justified every thing, authorised every thing, what would they have thought had a citizen mounted the tribune and related the following trait: "The Athenians were in great danger; Themistocles observed to the people who were assembled together, that he had found out a certain expedient to extricate them from their situation; but, as secrecy was necessary to its success, he could not mention it in public, and he demanded the people to name some persons who might form a judgment of the project. The people named Aristides solely, with whose virtue they were well acquainted. Aristides heard Themistocles, and afterwards informed the assembly, that, in fact, the expedient seemed to be in-

\* See Bayle, at the word *Brutus*.

fallible, but was unjust; and the people with one voice rejected the measure." Ancient history abounds with such traits, and great care has been taken to conceal them from the French people, whose good dispositions their leaders wanted to corrupt: and, in order to preach up murder and assassination with impunity, to declare openly, without any contradiction, that justice ought to be sacrificed to interest, that clemency and generosity are weaknesses, that moderation is a vice, and vengeance a duty, it was necessary to subvert the only prop of morality—it was necessary to destroy religion, and proscribe the Gospel. But the present rulers of France appear to hold such outrages in detestation, and have already given signal proofs of moderation and equity; and, whatever the enemies of the french republic may say, if they persevere in their conduct, if the liberty of the press be no more impeded, if sanguinary decrees be repealed, if they revive any sentiments of equity towards the unfortunate remains of the house of Bourbon\*, if they throw open the churches, and re-establish divine worship; if, in a word, they will restore humanity and good morals to the people, the sole foundation of liberty and happiness, their present legislators, in spite of the cry of envy and hatred, will acquire great glory, and save France; and France cannot be saved but on these conditions, for crimes alone produce anarchy, whilst order and peace are the happy fruits of virtue: the

\* And the personages of this unfortunate name, who exist in France, are so interesting! some for their virtues and irreproachable conduct, others on account of their youth and all the misfortunes they have suffered!

representatives, therefore, of the French people must henceforward either become the deliverers of their country, or victims to faction.

(14) The Saxons lost a decisive battle, which is named *the battle of the brook*, and upon the following account: The French being parched with thirst, and on the point of being forced into a retreat, were saved by a brook, which, dry till that moment, now poured forth a plentiful stream, and produced the double effect of slaking the thirst of the French and giving them encouragement, by persuading them that heaven had performed a miracle in their behalf. The event was consecrated by a medal, which represents a trophy erected beside a stream, with this inscription—*The Saxons vanquished before a brook*. [See the history of Charlemagne.]

The battle of the brook preceded the taking of Eresbourg. This fortress was deemed impregnable: the temple of Irminful was pillaged; the fortress delivered up to the flames; and the statue of the god, which was of wood, was consumed. Charlemagne, in order to remove an object of idolatry from the eyes of the Saxons, caused the stone column upon which the statue of Irminful was placed to be buried under ground. It was dug up under Lewis the Debonair, and removed to Hildesheim. In this city an annual festival is still solemnized in commemoration of the destruction of the idol of Irminful. [History of Charlemagne.]



(15) This incident of the wall is not void of probability; the history of the lower empire affords a similar example. Towards the year 1145, the emperor Manuel confined his cousin Andronicus in a dungeon: the latter found means of making an opening through a wall, but which led him into a dungeon still darker; there he remained, with the resolution of dying with hunger, in order to escape the horrors of an ignominious death; and with that view he carefully stopped up the hole he had made in his first dungeon. His wife was accused of having favoured his escape; and that princess was confined in the dungeon which he had left. Her cries penetrated the wall which separated him from his wife, and the unhappy Andronicus recognising the voice, removed the stones, and suddenly appeared before his wife. He thus continued to see her for a long while, without being discovered, receiving the nourishment which she spared from herself for his subsistence. In this same prison she had a son by him, who afterwards mounted the throne.

(16) According to *the Edda*, or the mythology of the ancient people of the north, the souls of the wicked suffer eternal punishment in a frightful abode named *Naftran*; and the good, who are transported into *Valhalla*, there find all their enemies and persecutors delivered up without defence to the same vengeance they themselves formerly exercised. Their principal divinities were, their great god *Asfader*, or *Odin*; *Frigga*, or the earth, his wife; *Gesione*, the goddess

goddess of chastity ; *Vanadis*, or *Freya*, the goddess of love and hope, &c.

(17) In Mr. de Ste. Palaye's work numberless examples of this ancient French generosity are to be found. I shall quote one only. In 1450 Lalain and Pietois fought on foot at a public tilting-match. A rich bracelet was the victor's prize ; the two combatants fell down one upon the other. They were taken up, and led before the judges. Lalain declared, that having been thrown down the prize belonged to Pietois, and the latter maintained, that he himself having likewise fallen he had no more right to the prize than Lalain. This contention of politeness created a strong and lasting friendship between these two generous foes. "Modesty," adds Mr. de Ste. Palaye, "was one of the principal virtues of ancient chivalry, and according to the maxim of Perceforets (an old author) 'That knight is a robber, who conceals the valiant deeds of another ; and he is disgraced as a braggart, who speaks of his own.' These principles of modesty induced the conquering knights to show particular attention to the vanquished. These examples of generosity, which were continually repeated at tournaments, could not be forgotten even in the midst of the carnage of war, in which the knights never lost sight of that general maxim, of being as compassionate after victory as daring in order to obtain it." [*Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry*, vol. 1.]

(18) "A great number of knights and gentry," says Mr. de Ste. Palaye, "had placed plumes or helmets over the gates of their castles, to serve as bea-

cons to such as appeared in the neighbourhood, and to announce to them a safe and agreeable lodging in a mansion, the owner of which would be honoured to receive them. And I have seen," adds our author, "several of these helmets still upon the top of our most ancient edifices, particularly those situate in the country. The guests were not only received and treated with kindness, but on their departure were laden with gifts; they were presented with rich garments, arms, horses, and frequently money. Thus did the hospitality of the time lay them under great and lasting obligations. If a knight, in the course of his journies or expeditions, had received hospitality or assistance from a man even of the lowest condition, he considered him ever after as his generous benefactor; he declared himself his knight, and swore to leave the most inviting paths of glory to acquit himself of the obligation. Such oath was inviolable."

[See *Memoirs of Ancient Chivalry* by Mr. de Ste. Palaye, vol. 1.]

(19) As long as chivalry prevailed, it was a general custom among the knights to make rash and sometimes very extravagant vows; whether they were shut up in a place to defend it, or making attack upon another; or whether in presence of the enemy in the field, inviolable and indispensable oaths were taken, obliging both the chiefs, and those whom they commanded, to shed all their blood rather than abandon the interest of the state. Besides these general vows, it was customary to make particular ones, both in the army and elsewhere. Valour gave occasion to many singular enterprises;

enterprises; such as being the first to place an ensign upon the walls or the highest tower of a city during a siege; throwing himself in the midst of the enemy, and striking the first blow; and, in a word, in achieving this or that exploit, giving such and such a proof of boldness, and frequently of temerity. The most valid of all vows was that called the vow of the peacock or the pheasant. The day on which a solemn engagement was to be made, a roasted pheasant or peacock, ornamented with its finest feathers, was carried by the ladies in a gold or silver dish into the midst of the assembly of knights. The bird was presented to each of them, and every knight made his vow thereupon; and it was then set on a table, to be cut up and distributed among all who were present.

In an ancient poem, called *The Vow of the Heron*, we read of an earl of Salisbury, in England, who, on the moment of his departure to the army, beseeched his mistress, in an assembly, to place *a finger of her beautiful hand upon his right eye, so that it might be quite closed*. The lady instead of one applied two fingers, and the earl swore upon a heron (upon which other knights had made different vows) not to open that eye till he had entered the French territory, in order to avenge Edward the Third, and had combated Philip in a pitched battle. During the whole war, the earl would not allow himself to see with that eye, and all the army, which was witness to his exploits, likewise bore witness to his fidelity in fulfilling his engagement. Du Guesclin vowed to swallow but three *basons of wine soup* till he had combated a certain englishman, who had given him a challenge. Laying siege to Montcon-



tour, he vowed neither to eat nor undress himself till the place was taken. Another time he vowed to take no more sustenance after the supper he was going to eat, until he had fallen in with the english, in order to combat them. At the siege of Bressiere, in Poictou, his squire made a vow to erect his master's banner, in the course of the day, upon the tower of that town, to cry out Du Guesclin when he had performed it, and to die rather than fail in the attempt. A few years ago, a singular monument of this custom among the ancient knights was to be seen in France. Near the town of Moutiers, between Riez and Senez, are two majestic hills, which are separated by a space of two hundred and fifty feet. From the summit of one hill to that of the other was extended an iron chain, in the middle of which hung a large star of five points. This was said to be one of the usual vows of the ages of chivalry: it was believed that some knight had sworn to chain two mountains together, and that the star was his device; and it is added, that the knight who made this vow was of the family of Blaccas. The town of Moutiers has blazoned its arms from this chain; it bears azure, two hills argent, fastened together by a chain, to which is suspended a star. These vows were the more inviolable, as they were addressed to God. They had all of them the sanction of religion, and it would have been held equally base and impious not to accomplish them: hence history does not afford an example of a knight who ever broke such vows\*. Death could alone hinder them from fulfilling so sacred an engagement.

\* Madame de Genlis is mistaken in this. T.

(20) Giaffar the Barmecide, or son of Barmec, was in fact a very great man. He was born in Persia, and became the vizier and favourite of the celebrated Aaron Alraschid. I suppose in my tale, that his family was European, that his name was Barmecide only, and that he did not assume the name of Giaffar till after his misfortunes. It is sufficient to observe here, that Aaron owed all the glory of his reign to the genius and virtues of his minister. Barmecide was adored by the people he governed, and received from public gratitude the fine surname of *generous*.

(21) Aaron Alraschid, the 25th caliph, was son of Mahadi, of the race of the Abassides. His father declared him his successor, in prejudice of his eldest son; but Aaron, respecting the rights of his brother Hadi Musa, refused the sceptre, and obtained an oath of fidelity in his favour, on the part of all the grantees. The new caliph was insensible of this benefit, and meditated the death of Aaron. But the mother of the ungrateful Musa, whom he had offended, caused him to be assassinated, and Aaron was proclaimed caliph. This prince had great personal endowments, and was celebrated for his liberality, his taste for the fine arts, and his patronage of men of talents. It is said the Arabians invented algebra during his reign. History farther informs us, that when Aaron went to war, he was attended by a hundred men of letters, whose conversation afforded him relaxation under the toils of war. [See the *Encyclopedia*, and the *History of the Arabians*, by the Abbé de Marigni.]

To the honour of sovereigns, as Mr. Gaillard observes, it should be published, that at this period there subsisted a sincere and personal friendship between two illustrious and heroic monarchs, one in the east, the other in the west; between the caliph Aaron and Charlemagne. These two princes, who never met in their lives, had conceived a mutual friendship for each other, from their respective reputations; a friendship far superiour to all attachments arising from political and interested motives. They strove to outdo each other in kindness, even in the smallest concerns; their mutual presents, as to choice, time, or circumstances, were ever marks of esteem and pledges of amity. Many historians assert, that the caliph ceded to Charlemagne, by way of gift, the sovereignty of Jerusalem and the Holy Land, reserving to himself only the title of his lieutenant. Charlemagne and Aaron loved the fine arts, and both of them made verses. Aaron was so sensible to the charms of poetry, that he would frequently weep at the recital of a beautiful composition; nor was he less alive to the charms of music; he composed many of the tunes which at this day are in vogue in the east. Aaron particularly resembled Charlemagne in acts of truth and justice: but is it possible for a conqueror to be always just and true! A woman one day complained to him of having been aggrieved by his soldiers, Aaron observed to her, it was written in the Koran, that princes wasted every country through which their armies passed. "Yes," replied the woman, "and I have likewise read there, that the houses of kings are destroyed on ac-

count of their injustice." The caliph approved of this hardy reply, and immediately redressed her wrongs. Aaron, as well as Charlemagne, was a great ass-giver; he died five years before the latter, in 809, after a reign of twenty-three years, and in the forty-seventh year of his age. [*See the History of Charlemagne.*]

(22) It is known that the first organ which was seen in Europe was sent to Charlemagne by the caliph Aaron. I have only superadded the origin of that instrument, which is entirely unknown to us.

(23) The answer of Barmecide, when the caliph was shutting the door, in order to read a work upon the rights of man, is truly historical. But it is related only that *he was going to read with a sage*, without mention being made of his name, and I have supposed that sage to be Barmecide.

(24) Arichifus, duke of Benevento, and an enemy to Charlemagne, died (as likewise did Romaldus, his eldest son) leaving but one son, named Grimaldo, then in the power of Charlemagne, to whom he had been delivered as a hostage. Charlemagne had (what were then called) well founded rights to the duchy of Benevento, and the Beneventines wished him to rule over them; but Charlemagne restored Grimaldo both his liberty and dominions. He ventured, says his historian, on observing the extent to which the power of injuries was carried in the world, to trust likewise in the power of favours. Grimaldo, touched at the



generosity of that prince, endeavoured to render himself worthy of it, and the emperor could not boast of a more faithful subject. He fought against the enemies of Charlemagne, against Adalgise, though his brother-in-law (he had married a sister of the latter), and the Greeks, and with equal ardour and success. After the defeat of Adalgise, history makes no further mention of him. It was believed that after this he retired to Constantinople, where he lived and died in obscurity.

(25) There was really a king of the name of Theudon, who lived at this period; he was one of the petty monarchs of Pannonia. History represents this prince such as I describe him; he was ambitious, deceitful, hypocritical, but eminent for military talents; he turned christian to please Charlemagne, and afterwards betrayed him. Pannonia was what is now called Hungary and Austria.

Duke Aimon was a relation or ally of Charlemagne, with whom, according to the old chronicles, he had many disputes. His four sons were named Renold, Richard, or Richardet, Alard, and Guichard; the eldest and most celebrated of whom was the renowned Renold, of Montauban. These four brothers, say the romances, all rode upon one horse, which was called *Bayard*. Bayle says, that Renold, whose name was so famous in romance and poesy, suffered martyrdom, and that the church of St. Renold, at Cologne, was dedicated to him.

(26) Amalberga, who has been canonized, was a  
young

young and beautiful lady of the court of Charlemagne. That prince fell in love with her, and the virtue of Amalberga was proof against the suit of the most amiable man, and greatest hero of his time. History tells us, that being one day on the balcony, and perceiving the emperor approaching, she threw herself from it, in order to avoid an interview, which she apprehended might be dangerous, and broke her arm in the fall. She at last retired to a convent, where she ended her days. [*See the History of Charlemagne.*]

(27) The duke of Spoleto, Henry duke of Friuli, Hartrad count of Thuringia, are real personages of those times. The latter was concerned in a great conspiracy against Charlemagne.

Constantine Porphyrogenitus, son of the empress Irene, was to have married Rotruda, one of the daughters of Charlemagne, and the emperor having broken off the marriage, Constantine joined his own resentment to that of Adalgise, but without any success.

(28) The idea of this fabulous plant is not of my own invention; I found it in Bomare's dictionary of natural history. The following is the description given by that naturalist: "*Baaras*, the name of a plant found upon mount Libanus in Syria. Josephus, the historian, says it shines during the night like a small taper; that its light goes out by day; that its leaves, when wrapped up in a handkerchief, get out of it, and quickly disappear; that this plant is beset by demons; that it has the power of changing all metals into gold, for which reason it is called, by the Arabians, the  
golden

*golden herb*; that it destroys the person who gathers it; if proper precautions be not taken, and these unhappily are not known; that it is nourished by bitumen; that its odour is suffocating, when it is plucked; and that it must be looked for in places planted with cedar trees."

(29) History informs us that Aaron gave the hand of his sister Abassa to Barmecide on this strange condition, and that he consented to the marriage, in order to see two persons he loved at the same time; and likewise told Barmecide that if the princess was not his sister, he would himself marry her. [*See the History of the Arabians, by the Abbé de Marigni.*]

(30) We learn from history that Barmecide, notwithstanding the watchfulness of the caliph, had a son by Abassa, whom he sent privately to Mecca.

(31) As neither the dead nor the living, not tyrants even, should be calumniated, in any work whatever; far from having added to the atrocity of this act, I have diminished the horror of it. The following is the historical fact: The caliph, on discovering the secret commerce of Barmecide and Abassa, ordered the massacre of his grand vizier, and all the Barmecides. Forty persons, it is said, who composed the whole family, were destroyed. The slave, charged with the assassination of the vizier, was much inclined to save him: "I will go," said he, "to the caliph, and announce thy death; if he ask me no questions, I will return and procure thy escape; but if he ask to see thy head, thou must then submit to the sentence."

The

The execrable tyrant ordered the head of Barmecide to be brought him, and the slave obeyed.....As to the princess Abassa, some say she was shut up in a dungeon, where she died with grief; others, that she was only banished from court, and was reduced to the most miserable condition; that many years after, a lady making her a present of five hundred drachmas, it afforded her as much delight as if she had been restored to her former state. Abassa had much wit, and made good verses. [*See the History of the Arabians, and the Dictionary of Illustrious Men.*]

(32) Barmecide was in reality idolized by the nation, and his death occasioned violent and universal sorrow. The caliph perceiving, that there were no bounds to this just regret, published an edict which forbade, under pain of death, the name of Barmecide to be uttered, or any mention to be made of him. An old man braved this prohibition, and at the very gates of the palace recited a copy of verses in the praise of Barmecide. The caliph, surprised at his boldness, ordered him to be brought into his presence; he asked him what could have encouraged such excessive temerity. "Gratitude," replied the old man; "Barmecide was my benefactor." "Well," returned the caliph, "I will henceforth be thy benefactor likewise; substitute my name in the place of Barmecide's." On saying this, he gave him a magnificent cup of pure gold. "O Barmecide," exclaimed the old man, "it is still to thee that I am indebted for this present; even after thy death I receive thy benefactions!—how then shall I be made to forget thee?"

(33) In



(33) In these ages there really existed a duchess of Cleves, of the name of Beatrice. History informs us, that the neighbouring princes persecuted and besieged her; that she was delivered by a brave french knight, named Trélie, and that she married her benefactor. This knight bore a swan upon his buckler, and the duchess instituted the order of *the Knights of the Swan*. These particulars I have found in the Encyclopedia, under the article of *Knights of the Swan*: and this article it was which furnished me with the idea of my tale, as well as its title. I have since found in another work, written a hundred and fifty years ago, and intituled, *The Imposture of the Devils*, an old fabulous tradition, founded upon the historical trait we have just mentioned. The authour of this work, who was physician to the duchess of Cleves, relates, that ancient manuscripts ascribed a miraculous origin to the dukes of Cleves, and thus he relates the tradition: "The sole remaining heir to the duchy was a princess; one day, as she was walking upon the banks of the river, she perceived a beautiful little vessel drawn by a noble swan. The princess remained motionless with surprise; but her astonishment was doubled when she beheld the vessel making toward the shore, and stopping near the spot where she stood. A young knight came out of the bark, and the vessel disappeared. The knight conducted the princess to her castle. This wonderful stranger received the name of the *Knight of the Swan*, and the princess married him. This pair were perfectly happy for two years; but, at the expiration of that time, the Knight of the Swan fell into a deep melancholy; and one morning when he was walking

on the banks of the river, the vessel and the swan again made their appearance ; the knight stepped on board, and the vessel disappeared for ever." The author, who gives this relation, gravely adds, that *he does not certify the truth of it* ; " but one thing is certain," says he, " that the castle is still full of monuments which attest the existence of a *Knight of the Swan*. Upon the towers are sculptured representations of that bird, and the old hangings represent the armours of chivalry, bearing a swan as an emblem," &c.

(34) This ancient castle still exists at one of the extremities of the pleasant city of Cleves. I passed through that place a year ago, and visited the habitation of Beatrice ; some parts of the castle have been rebuilt, but most of the ancient apartments and the antique roofs still subsist. I rectified upon the spot the description I give in my romance, and therefore it is exact ; but I could not make mention of the charming english garden which has been planted around the castle upon the slope of the mountain, and which is the most agreeable and picturesque I have ever seen of the kind. This delightful habitation was the residence of the governour of the city. I walked for two hours over the gardens, and I felt that it was there I should have written the history of the Knights of the Swan, and the duchess of Cleves. That nothing should be wanting to the agreeableness of this castle, it is situate at the extremity of a handsome city, in a country remarkable for its fertility, and the beauty of its woods, plantations, and walks.

(35) Bea-

(35) Beatrice in coming out to meet the knights acted conformably to the customs of her time. We read in Perceforest, says Mr. de Ste. Palaye, of a queen, although just recovered from sickness, setting out to meet a poor but brave and virtuous knight, who came to pay her a visit. Mr. de Ste. Palaye mentions other instances of this kind.

(36) Knights only had the right of wearing rich furs, such as the *vair*, the *ermine*, the *menu-vair*. Other furs of a more common kind were reserved for the squires. Scarlet, and all sorts of red colours were appropriated to the knights, because, says Mr. de Ste. Palaye, of their splendour and excellence. The colour is preserved in the dresses of superiour magistrates and doctors. It may besides be observed, that the liberality of the dukes towards her defenders was so much the more natural, as it was at that time a law of hospitality, and that the knights were always magnificently treated and maintained, and loaded with presents by the princes with whom they sojourned. See in Froissart the particulars of the excessive liberality of the count de Foix to the knights who visited at his court.

(37) It was, as I have already said, the indispensable duty of a knight, to succour all the unfortunate, and to devote himself particularly to the defence of oppressed women. Boucicaut instituted an order of chivalry under the name of the *white lady of the green shield*, in order to force restitution to be made to all ladies whose estates had been taken from them by violence

lence in recent wars. I could cite a multitude of instances of this kind, but wishing to write a note, and not a book on this subject, I confine myself to the relation of a few traits only; the following one is taken from the memoirs of ancient chivalry of Mr. de Ste. Palaye. I have retrenched some particulars, but what I extract is literally copied.

A faction known under the name of the *Jacquerie*, at first taking its rise in the diocese of Beauvais, soon extended itself to the provinces, and made a league against the order of knighthood, and all the nobility. More than a hundred thousand plebeans and peasants taking arms, resolving to exterminate the nobles, ravaged the country, burned the castles, and put the knights, the squires, and all the gentry to the sword, without sparing even women and children. The better to signalize an inveterate hatred against all the nobility, and as if it were to insult the gentleness and humanity of chivalry, they gave the name of virtue to the most brutal ferocity and most barbarous cruelty \*. The duchess of Normandy, wife of the regent, the duchess of Orleans, and three hundred ladies, were at Meaux, and not in a state of security; some detachments of these furious wretches, joined by others, falling forth from Paris and its neighbourhood, thought themselves sure of seizing a prey, which they imagined could not escape them. The inhabitants had opened their gates, and, in concert with this factious rabble, had driven the ladies and their attendants to

\* I ought here to repeat, that this passage is faithfully copied. See the edition in 3 vols. printed in the year 1781, vol. 1, page 198, and what follows.



take refuge in the place called the *market of Meaux*; a post divided from the town by the river Marne. The danger was extreme; and there were no excesses which were not to be dreaded from these turbulent bands. The count de Foix, and the captal de Buch, who at this time were on their return from Prussia, heard of this sad news at Châlons. Although they had only sixty lances, that is to say, sixty knights with their ordinary attendants, they instantly determined to go and join the small number of the defenders of the fortress of Meaux. The honour of the ladies did not allow the count de Foix to reflect upon the danger of the enterprise, or the captal de Buch to consider that he was an englishman; he eagerly availed himself of the liberty which the truce between France and England afforded him, to gratify a sentiment more powerful in the heart of a knight than national enmity. These two heroes with their little troop repaired to Meaux, and marched against the enemy. The knights cut their way through the hostile ranks, slew seven thousand men, dispersed the rest, and returned in triumph to the ladies, whom they delivered, &c. *vol. 1, page 199,* and what follows.

This generosity towards women was not peculiar to France and England; it was universal throughout all Europe, and even in earlier times it prevailed among the least civilized nations. The north was the cradle of chivalry says Mr. Mallet; all the monuments of the ancient Scandinavia evince it; in these monuments the taste for chivalry, as in its bud, is to be seen; the history of other nations represents it as unfolding itself and spreading into Spain, France, Italy, and England,  
with

with the people of the north who established themselves there. Wherever we open the old histories of the north, we shall read of the feats of knights of equal gallantry and prowess. A swedish prince had a daughter of rare beauty, named Thora; she was carried away by violence. Her father published in all the neighbouring states, that he who conquered the ravisher of Thora should obtain her hand, of whatever condition he might be. The youthful Regner delivered the fair captive, and married her. Thora afterwards dying, Regner married a young shepherdes named Aslanga, whom he raised to the throne. *Harold the fine haired*, king of a part of Norway, fell in love with a young girl named *Gida*, and asked her in marriage; but she replied, that in order to merit her heart, he must signalize himself by more glorious exploits than he had yet achieved; and that she should not consider him worthy of her until he had subdued all Norway. Harold swore to take no farther care of his hair till he had completed the conquest of that country, nor did he marry Gida before he had brought the whole kingdom into subjection. These facts, and a thousand others of the kind, appear to be well authenticated; but (continues Mr. Mallet) it signifies little whether they be true or not; it is sufficient to give us an idea of the manners of those times, that these chronicles are written by men well informed in the history and customs of their country. [*History of Denmark, by Mr. Mallet* \*.]

\* This history, containing nine volumes, is written with much sagacity; it abounds in curious and interesting inquiries, and gives a clear idea of the history of the northern nations.

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It was by their elevated sentiments and irreproachable conduct, that the women of those days acquired such an empire. The laws of chivalry, says Mr. de Ste. Palaye, which forbid slandering the ladies, obliged them to have particular regard to the decency of their own conduct; and in order to be respected, it was necessary they should first learn to respect themselves. But, if by an opposite conduct they gave cause of just censure, they had always to apprehend some knight at hand, who would call them to an account for their behaviour. The chevalier de la Tour, in some instructions he addresses to his daughters, towards the year 1391, makes mention of a knight of his time, who, passing by castles inhabited by ladies, marked with infamy the abode of those females, who were not worthy to receive *loyal knights pursuing honour and virtue*; and on such as merited public esteem, he lavished his praises. The same writer mentions, that in a grand assembly, *the good knights* placed a lady of inferior condition, but *of good reputation*, above a lady of high rank, because the latter was *blasmée de son honneur*; that is to say, of bad repute.

A man may run into many follies for a worthless woman, but can only achieve great actions for her who is capable of inspiring great sentiments.

(38) I know of no governments purely democratic, but in the smaller cantons of Switzerland; and I know of no places where tyranny exercises a more arbitrary oppressive sway. There, although no sumptuary laws exist; yet, if people appear in public dressed in a better garb than the rude manufactory of the country, they

are

are insulted. There, if a man think fit to embellish his house or garden, or construct a dwelling more remarkable than those of his neighbours, *the sovereign people* rase or burn his house, and cut down his plantations. There, if a magistrate give offence, the people rise, and seize and hang him without any formality of law; for *popular justice* is very expeditious. The Landamtmann of Zug was executed in this manner two years before the French revolution, and such examples are very frequent. It is true, that, after the death of this magistrate, the people found out that the unfortunate man was innocent, and they honoured him with *a handsome funeral*. In fine, the almighty people of these small democratic cantons have but one distinct idea, which is, they that are *the strongest* are *the masters*; and they very naturally conclude thence, that their will is the only sacred law, and that every thing should yield to it. The extravagant pride, which this persuasion creates, gives them a sovereign contempt for all strangers; thus, none can have the honour of being naturalized in these little cantons, or even to purchase an estate there; and, in no country are strangers so ill treated by the inhabitants. In the public markets, for instance, they are made to pay at least the double of its value for every article; if their servants dispute the price, they are told, that strangers are not allowed to haggle; and if they give the money which is asked, without making any difficulty, the other buyers complain, that such prodigality raises the price of things. In such a predicament a stranger is at a loss how to act. While I lament these abuses, I am not the less struck with admiration and respect for a country, the other can-



cantons of which are so praise-worthy on account of their laws, their morals, and the well informed and virtuous men who govern them.

(39) This Astolphus, the English paladin, is a real personage of the time, of much renown in old chronicles and ancient romances, and likewise the hero of several modern poems.

(40) Queen Eadburga really existed at this period; I have given her the character which history ascribes to her, and have made no alteration in the facts relating to her story. She was the rival of Egbert; the West-Angles abandoned her and repaired to his standard, and she deserved this fate for her vices, the depravity of her manners, and her crimes. Driven out of England, she found an asylum at the court of Charlemagne. One day she observed to that emperor, that her highest ambition was to be queen of France; "Well," replied Charlemagne, by way of joke, "I am a widower, my eldest son is a bachelor; which of the two will you marry?" "The younger," said Eadburga. "Had you chosen me," replied the emperor, "I should have given you my son, but since you prefer him to me, you shall have neither of us." Charlemagne conferred an abbey upon this princess, which she quitted in order to go off with a new paramour. She at length retired to Pavia, where she ended her days in misery.

END OF THE NOTES TO THE SECOND VOLUME.

TRANS-

TRANSLATIONS  
OF THE  
*FRENCH AND ITALIAN MOTTOES.*

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VOLUME SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

HOW pitiable is the lot of him  
Who has become the voluntary slave  
Of two bright eyes, and beauteous ebon tresses,  
That veil a wicked and perfidious heart?  
Unhappy wight!—In vain he seeks to flee;  
Or, if he flee, he, like the stricken deer,  
Carries his rankling wound where'er he goes.  
Ashamed, both of himself and of his love,  
He dares not tell, yet tries in vain to cure it!

CHAPTER III.

1. What charm is this?—The world beneath my feet,  
I mount to God. Unhappy is the man  
Who fondly puts his confidence in man.  
Not swifter glides the vessel on the waves,  
Not swifter flies the arrow from the bow,  
Than human glory pales.—Such is man!
2. Pensive, alone, my measured steps I bend  
O'er dismal deserts, unfrequented plains;  
And anxiously avoid the haunts of men.

CHAPTER IV.

Why, love unjust and cruel!—why so rare  
A mutual flame? And why dost thou delight  
To sow the seeds of discord in our hearts?

## TRANSLATIONS OF THE

### CHAPTER V.

Hypocrisy is a homage which vice pays to virtue.

### CHAPTER VI.

Ungrateful!—What have I not dared and done  
To love and please thee? Have I not betray'd,  
On thy account, my country, father, king?  
Yet, see the recompense I now receive!

### CHAPTER VII.

1. At once, an object terrible and dear!

### CHAPTER VIII.

2. Yes! maugre that great crime, which I deplore  
With you, I cannot altogether hate  
Myself, while you still love me, and vouchsafe  
With my remorse to blend your tears of pity.

### CHAPTER IX.

Doubt not a time will come——

### CHAPTER X.

1. The history of every woman is a romance.

### CHAPTER XI.

1. Towns laid in ashes! rivers tinged with blood!  
Plains desolated!—only meet my view.
2. I will not be th' accomplice of his crimes:  
No; rather let me be his last sad victim.

### CHAPTER XII.

How dear, how precious, is a faithful friend!

### CHAPTER XIII.

Happy abode of sweet simplicity!  
Receive the homage of my ravished eyes.

## FRENCH AND ITALIAN MOTTOES.

In thee alone I find the laws observed  
Of ancient hospitality:—in thee  
Truth undisguis'd, graces devoid of art,  
And sentiments without their affectation.

### CHAPTER XIV.

2. Is there a soul so stubborn, as not to feel reverential emotions, on considering the gloomy spaciousness of our churches, and hearing the devotion-inspiring tones of our organs?

### CHAPTER XV.

A tyrant's friendship is a chain of slavery.

### CHAPTER XVII.

1. His hate is ever greater than his love.
2. At court, the services of many years  
Are in a moment cancelled and forgot.  
There, favour, always sought too eagerly,  
Is often but a snare to cover death.

### CHAPTER XVIII.

1. What charms in beauty, when adorn'd with virtue!

### CHAPTER XIX.

Not always best, the counsel of the many.

### CHAPTER XX.

1. That cruel art, which teaches to presage  
Future misfortune, is not surely wisdom:  
'Tis folly.—When the timid, credulous mind  
Paints to itself supposed impending ills,

The



## TRANSLATIONS, &c.

The image always is beyond the truth.  
Why, then, should foolish man himself torment  
With vain anxiety, and realize  
Evils, which, at the most, are only doubtful?

### 2. Myfterious doings cover dark designs.

## CHAPTER XXI.

1. All power is derived from God: and whatsoever is derived from God, is established only for the advantage of mankind. The great would be useless upon the earth, if there were none poor and unfortunate: their elevation they owe to the public needs: and so far are the people from being made for them, that they themselves are entirely made for the people.

2. So strong is popular prejudice in favour of the great, that if these would but think of being good, it would amount to idolatry.

## CHAPTER XXII.

The Briton, independent, brave and bold,  
Was never yet a slave to court caprice \*:  
He never regulates his love or hate  
By kingly favour: no such prejudice  
Has any influence on his actions.—He,  
To save his country, would o'return a throne!

## CHAPTER XXIII.

The heart has secrets to the mind unknown.

\* Did Mr. De la Harpe know us sufficiently? or are we changed, since he wrote?

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